

Silent Running – Chapter 10

*Tin soldiers and Nixon coming,
We're finally on our own.
This summer I hear the drumming,
Four dead in Ohio.*

*Gotta get down to it
Soldiers are cutting us down
Should have been done long ago.
What if you knew her
And found her dead on the ground
How can you run when you know?*

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Neil Young, *Ohio*

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How many million dead in New York, Los Angeles, Dallas and the other cities? Some of those people might have been protesting a war, if we had a war to protest, but we didn't. We now had *an issue*, who had bombed the US? Don't ask the FBI or CIA, they aren't certain. According to an AP Ipsos Poll, most Americans thought it was either Muslims or North Koreans. If Detroit hadn't been bombed, I'm sure the majority would have said Muslims. Everybody was wrong, but we didn't know that at Thanksgiving of 2001. The ongoing efforts to rebuild New Orleans gave way to ongoing efforts to clean up 8 cities and remove any radioactive waste so people could rebuild.

Hillary was on TV being criticized like Bush was after Katrina. All she could say was what Bush had said, "These things take time and money." Unfortunately for her, she didn't have Brownie to blame it on.

While Paris might be in tornado alley, tornadoes were a rare occurrence, and based on a national weather service report, Paris was located in a 0.5 per 1,000 square mile per year zone. Which translates into one per 1,000 square miles every other year. Contrary

to the popular concept, mobile homes aren't tornado magnets. It has to do with their construction and they don't fare as well if they're hit by a tornado.

As far as I know, there aren't any volcanoes in Texas. In summary, Texas is a composite of nature's processes. Texas today is but one frame in a dynamic geological kaleidoscope of changing rivers, subsiding basins, shifting beaches, uplifting mountains, and eroding plateaus. The face of modern Texas is the link that connects its geologic past to its inevitable future. Earthquakes?

The largest earthquake in Texas

Near Valentine, Texas
1931 08 16 11:40:22.3 UTC
Magnitude 5.80
Intensity VIII

In terms of magnitude and damage, this is the largest earthquake known to have occurred in Texas. The most severe damage was reported at Valentine, where all buildings except wood-frame houses were damaged severely and all brick chimneys toppled or were damaged. The schoolhouse, which consisted of one section of concrete blocks and another section of bricks, was damaged so badly that it had to be rebuilt. Small cracks formed in the schoolhouse yard. Some walls collapsed in adobe buildings, and ceilings and partitions were damaged in wood-frame structures. Some concrete and brick walls were cracked severely. One low wall, reinforced with concrete, was broken and thrown down. Tombstones in a local cemetery were rotated. Damage to property was reported from widely scattered points in Brewster, Jeff Davis, Culberson, and Presidio Counties. Landslides occurred in the Van Horn Mountains, southwest of Lobo; in the Chisos Mountains, in the area of Big Bend; and farther northwest, near Pilares and Porvenir. Landslides also occurred in the Guadalupe Mountains, near Carlsbad, New Mexico, and slides of rock and dirt were reported near Picacho, New Mexico. Well water and springs were muddied throughout the area. Also felt in parts of Oklahoma, New Mexico, and in Chihuahua and Coahuila, Mexico.

Relax, a tornado is far more likely. Hurricanes? A hurricane would start to break up once it hit the Gulf Coast. By the time it got to Paris, we'd get a heavy thunderstorm or maybe that rare tornado. It didn't appear that Hillary was going to start WW III so I was more concerned about the weather. Between the garden and the money we didn't spend on the apartment, by Christmas the shelter was fully restocked and we were ready for the next emergency/disaster. I was beginning to feel a bit long in the tooth at 67, about like I did back in 2003 when I really got sick. All the exercise helping Sharon had given me a new lease on life. Sitting around after it began to get cold, wore me out.

I couldn't decide whether I wanted to start another story or not. I had written several, all variations on the same theme. I asked and Damon told me he wasn't interested in finishing *In Harm's Way*. I decided to talk to Derek about it.

“Hi, Dad, what’s up?”

“Inflation, unemployment, my blood pressure, my blood sugar and my level of boredom. I wanted to talk to you about two things. First what was it like in Dallas; and two, what can I do to keep from going stir crazy?”

“We didn’t really get into either of the ground zeros Dad, we had perimeter security. Dallas is big and there were two areas bombed.”

“I know, Love Field and DFW. I checked and the Dallas Metroplex covers about 9,000mi². What were you doing?”

“Patrols looking for looters.”

“Using tanks?”

“A couple of times it almost seemed like we were back in Baghdad. At least they didn’t have IEDs. When we pointed the big gun at them, they almost always surrendered.”

“Why would you do that?”

“To use the coaxial machinegun. It would have been stupid to open the hatch and man the 50. Our instructions were to let people with food and water go. Why would anyone need a big screen TV?”

“I think those are crimes of opportunity. Thing is, in the Dallas area, some of that stuff probably wouldn’t have worked because of the EMP from the detonation. How high was the one over the airport?”

“About 2,000 feet. They said it was close to optimum altitude.”

“But you’re done, right? You don’t have to go back?”

“No, the Texas Defense force took over. I’ll be out in a year, I’m not planning on reenlisting.”

“Funny, I figured you for a lifer.”

“I’d planned on it, Dad. Now, I don’t know. The military shouldn’t have police powers.”

“Say, did I tell you Sgt. Baker got me some Raufoss?”

“Really?”

“Yeah. It was belted, I had to strip it out of the links. I didn’t know they used Raufoss as a belted ammo, isn’t it too expensive?”

“Beats me, I’ve never heard of it being belted. Standard combat mixed is 4 and 1. Usually ball and tracer for practice or AP and APIT for combat.”

“Anyway, we have about 2,500 rounds of .50 caliber ammo now. Did the government ever figure out who was responsible for the attacks?”

“No one claimed credit Dad. It could have been North Korea, China, Muslim extremists or some other actor that no one has thought of. Those were mostly hydrogen bombs. To the best of my knowledge, only the big 5 have them. My guess would be that Russia was the source of the weapons and they were purchased on the arms market.”

“Russia would never sell hydrogen bombs, Derek.”

“A general might. Russia and China a major arms exporters. It could have been Chavez or Ortega, they both hate us. So does Cuba, for that matter.”

“Fidel is dead from cancer.”

“So what? The communists have a major foothold in the western Hemisphere.”

“The Cold War ended almost 20 years ago.”

“You claimed the Cold War never ended. Have you changed your mind?”

“About every 5 minutes, but not about that. It has changed character, however.”

“As long as we follow the Monroe Doctrine, it will always be us against them. The them might change, but we’re still the target.”

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Derek was thoroughly indoctrinated in my set of beliefs and Damon only slightly less so. I guess you could call it an old family tradition. The main difference was that Derek had seen it first hand in Korea, Kosovo, Iraq and now, Dallas. The country was beginning to sing its swan song, it just didn’t know it. Lincoln had called it a government of the people, by the people and for the people. Our country had been young then, only 87 years old. Now we were 235+ years old and I believe we’d lost sight of the American Dream. The power had slowly been transferred from the people to the government. As long as we had a 2 party system consisting of the Democrats and Republicans, it wasn’t going to change.

What the country really needed were moderate politicians. What it got was the far left and the far right. It didn’t do to mix politics and religion, which was part of the reason for the 1st Amendment. They made big deals out of little things and vice versa. With the majority of the country Christian, why couldn’t they display the 10 Commandments on

the courthouse wall? Was there something wrong with the addition made to the Pledge of Allegiance back in 1954? We can trust in God, but we can't talk about it in school. We can pass laws that take away our basic freedoms and if we don't the President will issue an Executive Order and do it anyway. Wait, we don't have to, they already did it and the President signed it into law.

Derek reminded me that Texas became a Republic in 1836 and didn't become a state until 9 years later in 1845. Texas used to be the biggest state and I don't know about the population; now, Texas is second to Alaska in area, and second to California in population. The population was still over 22 million, even taking the deaths from the terrorist attacks into account. What's more Texas permitted machine guns, more or less. A summary of the law said: It is unlawful to possess, manufacture, transport, repair or sell a machine gun, explosive weapon, short-barreled firearm, or silencer. Federal registration of such an item under the National Firearms Act is a defense to this prohibition. I hadn't bothered to have the fine points of the law explained and only had those suppressors.

We closed all the Civil Defense shelters a long time ago; By EO 12148, 20Jul79, retroactive to 15Jul79, pursuant to Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1978, effective 1Apr70. While it existed, it coordinated and directed federal, state, and local civil defense program activities, including fallout shelter; chemical, biological and radiological warfare defense; emergency communications and warning systems; post-attack assistance and damage assessment; preparedness planning; and government continuity. It had been doing that in some fashion since it was created in 1950.

I suspected, rather than knew, that if the country fell apart Texas might become a Republic again. Sharon and I flew 3 flags, the US Flag, the Texas state Flag and a Gadsden Flag. At 7am Central time, on Friday, December 7th the EAS system kicked in. The Vice President stated that the United States was under a full nuclear attack. The number of incoming warheads exceeded our ABMs by 20 to 1. The missiles were 20 minutes out and everyone was advised to take cover in an underground shelter. I dug out my Alamo Flag and added it to the other three. That's the one that has 1824 printed on it. The 1824 is a reference to the disabused Constitution of Mexico of 1824.

While Sharon called the kids, I opened the shelter. I added fresh batteries to the radiological equipment and fired up the Kohler. With 10 minutes to spare, I started moving things from the house to the shelter. I had the appliance cart strapped to the freezer, food in the shelter and was moving the guns and ammo when Damon showed up with his 3 kids and Lorrie and Jeffrey. We hadn't closed the shelter when the warheads arrived. I was upstairs, rifle in hand, waiting for Amy to show up with Audrey and Udell.

"Move it Amy, we're going to get an EMP this time."

Damon helped me move the woodpile and close the shelter cover. We buttoned up about 10 minutes after the first warheads hit. The VP hadn't said who was attacking, but only one country has as many warheads as the US did. That's why MAD worked for 40

years; we'd wipe each other out. 69 (three score and 9) years to the day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, it happened again. I assume that Christmas was cancelled.

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The generator ran smoothly on the 50-50 diesel/biodiesel mix. One of the grandchildren turned on the TV and checked every channel, there was nothing but snow. I made them disconnect it from the cable, just in case; they could watch the movies a second time.

After the bombing in Dallas, many people in Paris started to get into preps, they didn't want to be caught flatfooted again. Frankly, that surprised me; most people think lightning never strikes twice. There had almost been a shortage of canning jars, lots of folks planted liberty gardens and we sold the extra potatoes at the Farmers' Market. We used the money from the spuds to fill in our firewood pile.

By now, anyone who really wanted to know knew we had a bomb shelter. At least we remembered to lock the house this time. Very few people knew where we lived. I usually just told them *yonder* when they asked. The Southern language is easy to learn, but you never forget.

"Did you put a new battery in the CD V-717?"

"Didn't have time, there are batteries on the shelf. Just use those log sheets I printed up, they're on a clipboard."

"Gary, I don't have anything thawed out for supper."

"Sharon, you have all day, put a roast or two in the crock pots. Or, if you like, just fix Macaroni and cheese."

"Grandpa, what's this movie about?"

"What's the title?"

"*The Day After.*"

"That's the perfect movie to watch kids, it will show you what to expect when we get out of this hole in the ground. It is the mid-1980s. An aggressive Soviet leadership orders troops marched to the border of West Berlin, and then decides to invade West Germany with multiple armored tank & troop divisions. In Lawrence, Kansas – on the border with Missouri – a family is preparing for the wedding of their eldest daughter, and Dr. Oakes, Jason Robards, is keeping busy in his role as chief of surgery in the small University Hospital at Lawrence. These people go on with their daily lives but are drawn closer to the possibility of a nuclear war, as the Russians use a nuclear ballistic missile against a West German city, and then attack a US warship in the Persian Gulf. The Americans

strike back by hitting a Soviet ship, and then the Russians hit NATO regional headquarters with a nuclear warhead. People start creating makeshift fallout shelters in their basements, but many are caught off guard when, 1 at a time, nuclear missiles are launched from their silos along the Kansas – Missouri border. USAF officers then announce that 300+ ICBMs are inbound to the US, and 2 of them strike Kansas City, Missouri. Many are killed outright, but still more must face the danger of radioactive fallout. Now, the characters we follow are living in a barren, devastated world – devoid of electricity, safe drinking water, and food – and filled with radioactivity, starvation, and disease...in the horrific aftermath of *The Day After*...

“Oh yuck, I don’t want to watch that.”

“Why don’t you put on *The Day After Tomorrow*? It doesn’t have any bombs.”

“What’s that about?”

“It’s a very bad movie about global climate change.”

“Grandpa, what’s going to happen?”

“We’ll blow them up and they’ll blow us up. Shortly after, the snow will begin to fall and we’ll get snow butt deep on a 9’ Indian. We may be stuck here until the thaw. When it warms up, it will be hotter than blue blazes.”

“It’s not the end of the world?”

“No, it’s the end of civilization as we know it.”

“Huh?”

“No more TV, no more phones and probably no more electricity. Most cars won’t run and you won’t be able to go to the store if you need something for dinner. The good news is that there probably won’t be any more world wars.”

“Why not?”

“People will be fighting locally for scarce resources, like food. Any military forces left will be busy protecting the country. Think about it, it’s been 5 years and New Orleans isn’t rebuilt. It’s been over a year and we haven’t finished cleaning up the cities the terrorists bombed. They never finished the replacement for the World Trade Center. If logic holds, the enemy took out every major city and every major airport in the country.”

Aaron was born in 1993; he had nothing to compare the current events with. Frankly none of us did. Until the terrorist bombed the cities, a nuclear weapon hadn’t been used in anger since 1945. Since 1948, the world’s hot spot had been the Middle East. There

had been a war going on somewhere on the face of the planet my whole life and, that doesn't include the Cold War.

When a person thinks about it, it gives a whole new meaning to the movie, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. I rather doubt the words *Klaatu barada nikto* will bail us out this time. With hundreds of billions of stars, the probability of another intelligent life form in the Universe was about 100%. Whether they had visited Earth was pure speculation.

I like Aaron, he's my bud. He sure knows how to ask questions, he can drive you crazy. A few days into the new war he had a question, what did I do in the Air Force. What could I say, I turned into an alcoholic? I was born that way and didn't really start to drink until I got to Lowry AFB. After graduating, I was assigned to Edwards AFB, to work at the Rocket Site. We did many interesting things during the early sixties; those were the days of the Atlas F and Titan missiles. While I was going to school at Lowry, they were building Titan Missile Silos. The Titan II was in service from 1963 to 1987. The original 63 SAC missiles were distributed at the Vandenberg AFB training base (nine) plus three rings of 18 missiles each surrounding Davis-Monthan AFB near Tucson, AZ, at Little Rock AFB in Arkansas, and McConnell AFB in Wichita, KS.

There were many interesting schools at Lowry, one taught how to work on nuclear weapons and another taught the Vulcan Cannon. I honestly wished I hadn't done as well on the entrance exams; maybe I could have gone to one of the other schools. At the time, I didn't know how lucky I was. I put in for Kirtland AFB; I wanted to work at the Air Force Research Laboratory. Trying to answer his question, I sat and thought what we did at the Rocket Site. Rockwell tested the F-1 engines there; they're the engine used on the first stage of the Saturn booster for the Apollo program. That was a civilian project so I hadn't worked on that.

This was hard, it was a long time ago and I couldn't think of anything I'd worked on that had directly become part of the space program. I told him to give me more time to think about it, surely there was something I'd done that had been noteworthy. I figured it out and the next chapter is what I told Aaron. It contains the history of the Air Force's ICBM program and you will see the little part I played in it. After I got out of the Air Force, I went to college at Iowa State University where I eventually met Novie White. Novie was in the AFROTC program and was stationed at Minot AFB, in a silo as a control officer when he went on active duty. I was honored to be his best man at his wedding.

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Bad things happen in 3s. We had a terrorist attack and WW III. The third event in this little story is what happened after WW III. Do you still remember what Gen. Casey said and the John Warner Bill? We had a left wing liberal in the White House and I can't tell you whether that was good or bad, it just was. The public beat Bush up over the failed response to Hurricane Katrina and in response John Warner fixed it so the President wouldn't be so hampered the next time. I hadn't read the article at Wiki when I wrote the first 9½ chapters and maybe that's why the story is wordy and wanders.

Miss Holland taught me to really read in 9th grade. Any individual who isn't filled with shock and awe at the power contained in section 1076 honestly deserves what he/she gets. It was just such an emergency as the terrorist attacks or WW III that Warner must have had in mind when t(he)y wrote the bill. Battle of Jakes and Pax Americana be damned, it was legal now. Worse, the Russians gave Hillary the excuse she needed to make herself Queen.

I wish I could have sweated bullets, more ammo would be better. We counted it, several times. It wasn't that we didn't have plenty, we did; but who knew how long this thing could last? By the time the air cleared and we were out of the shelter, I'd be 68, too old for everything. I suppose you want a few details.

None of us ever got what you could call a weapons count. The list of cities looked lot like the list of 100 largest cities in the US, maybe 150. Like Flight ER Doc or someone has suggested, they hit a lot of airports. We figured that was to prevent the military from using them. Edwards ABF has the largest landing strip in the world, Rogers Dry Lake. It is also possible to land aircraft on Rosamond Dry Lake and Groom Lake. I'll bet there are places in the Bonneville Salt Flats you could land a plane too. We could only assume that the Air Force had a plan to relocate aircraft to new locations in the event of WW III.

The closest thing we had to a medical person was Derek, a Combat Lifesaver. He could do a lot; we had a fair amount of medical supplies. If Aaron was right and this was TE-OCAWKI, we'd be out salvaging immediately. I've told you 50 times now, you absolutely have to salvage the things that you need. If you don't, you wind up living without your pills and wiping your bottom with the JC Penny catalog. If you take as many pills as I do, you won't live long without the meds. TEOTWAWKI seems improbable, but TEOCAWKI doesn't.

Maybe you tell yourself you wouldn't want to live in a world like this, maybe. That's contrary to human nature, don't kid yourself. Besides, what about your family? Someone has to look after the younger members of the family, at least until they're old enough to strike out on their own. Over your lifetime, you've accumulated a lot of information and with the schools closed; it will be your obligation to share it with the children. If, by this point, you've managed to keep them out of harm's way, they will look to you for answers. If you don't have the answers, do the next best thing, fake it.

If you're reading this that means that you know how to read and write, ergo, you're literate. Kids don't come that way; it's going to be up to you. Yeah, they can be little monsters, still... Another rule might help, spare the rod and spoil the child. The DCFS isn't around now to arrest you for spanking your kid, if they deserve it, but don't go overboard. These days, child abuse just might get you shot. I think people won't be putting up with things they used to be afraid to object to, a word to the wise.

I'm not looking forward to leaving this shelter; I don't believe we're going to find a *Brave New World* when we do. 1984, maybe.

There wasn't a hue and cry when Casey made his statement. People complained about the Military Commissions Act, but only one far left Democrat raised hell over the John Warner Bill. People were focusing on the wrong thing, terrorists don't have any rights; they gave them up to become a terrorist. If you want to play word games, what exactly is a military combatant? Trust me, if he/she has a rifle or RPG in his/her hand, they qualify.

US Northern Command's planning for catastrophic scenarios eventually may be used by other commands and agencies, a senior Defense Department official said here earlier this week. Peter F. Verga, principal deputy to the assistant secretary of defense for homeland defense, spoke during the 2006 Homeland Defense Symposium Oct. 3.

"While in execution, the (Hurricane) Katrina operations and all of the missions that have been done by US Northern Command have been done magnificently," Verga said in an interview following his address. "We've identified shortcomings and are pre-planning for those 15 national planning scenarios."

Organizations at all levels of government use the national planning scenarios to help identify critical tasks and capabilities that would be required in a coordinated effort to manage major events. The scenarios include responses to terrorist attacks and natural disasters. The scenarios were developed to implement Homeland Insecurity Presidential Directive 8, which establishes policies to strengthen preparedness to both prevent and respond to significant incidents at the federal, state and local levels.

Verga said the burden of DOD planning for the scenarios will fall on NORTHCOM because the scenarios are domestic-based. US Pacific Command and US Southern Command will have similar planning responsibilities for Hawaii and US territories in their areas of responsibility, but Verga said they will probably be able to build on NORTHCOM's work, instead of doing the fundamental work.

"The strategic guidance statement that is about to come out specifically requires a detailed level of planning for those 15 national planning scenarios," he said.

Verga said the intent is for DOD to plan what capabilities it can bring to bear on those situations. Other agencies are taking a similar look at what capabilities they can bring.

"It's that synergy of all the departments coming together, having thought about the scenarios and the problems in the same structured manner, that should give us that coherent detailed planning that the national response plan actually calls for," Verga said. He cited the implementation plan for the strategy for pandemic influenza and the national implementation plan for the global war on terrorism as two examples of that synergy.

In Verga's address to the symposium attendees, he praised DODs emphasis on a "culture of planning."

"It really is getting other people in the departments and agencies to think about planning," he said. "I see that as the challenge ahead."

Silent Running – Chapter 11

*Revvin' up your engine
Listen to her howlin' roar
Metal under tension
Beggin' you to touch and go*

*Highway to the Danger Zone
Right into the Danger Zone*

*Headin' into twilight
Spreadin' out her wings tonight
She got you jumpin' off the deck
And shovin' into overdrive*

*Highway to the Danger Zone
I'll take you
Right into the Danger Zone*

*You'll never say hello to you
Until you get it on the red line overload
You'll never know what you can do
Until you get it up as high as you can go*

*Out along the edges
Always where I burn to be
The further on the edge
The hotter the intensity*

*Highway to the Danger Zone
Gonna take you
Right into the Danger Zone*

Highway to the Danger Zone

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“Aaron, let me tell you about the US missile program.”

“On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union successfully launched into orbit the world’s first artificial satellite, Sputnik. Ham radio operators in the eastern United States turned their dials to lower frequency bands and anxiously listened as the 184-pound Sputnik emitted a mechanical ‘... beep... beep... beep...’ while passing overhead. Other radio operators quickly recorded the broadcast and, within hours, Americans in their living rooms heard Sputnik’s transmission via radio and television news flashes. The message seemed to confirm America’s worst fears: the Soviets had technologically surpassed the United

States and gained supremacy of outer space. The Soviet scientific community wasted little time boasting about their apparent win. Immediately after the launch, one Muscovite scientist commented, 'Americans design better automobile tailfins, but we design the best intercontinental ballistic missiles and earth satellites.' In the United States, one headline proclaimed: 'US Must Catch Up with Reds or We're Dead.'

"In truth, the significance of the successful launching was not so much Sputnik, but the huge Soviet rocket that hurled the satellite into space. With Sputnik, which is Russian for 'fellow traveler,' the Soviets demonstrated the ability of their SS-6 launcher to propel a missile toward a target thousands of miles away. Four years earlier, the Soviets exploded the H-bomb. Now, the frightening prospect of a Soviet missile delivering a nuclear bomb to an American city in less than an hour revived what some called a Pearl Harbor atmosphere throughout the United States. At the urging of his military advisors and under tremendous public pressure, President Dwight D. Eisenhower reluctantly accelerated America's ICBM program.

"The shock of Sputnik abruptly reversed what Air Force Secretary Donald Quarles had characterized as America's poor man's approach to the ICBM program. Within six months after Sputnik, the Nation's space research and development budget mushroomed from an average half billion dollars a year to more than \$10.5 billion. Much of the money went to the development of the Minuteman missile. In 1958, Congress increased the appropriation for Minuteman from \$50 to \$140 million. The following year, Congress added two billion dollars to the Minuteman budget, to be spread out over the next five years.

"Sputnik sparked the development and deployment of the Minuteman missile. But the origins of the Minuteman missile program were deeply rooted in the years immediately following World War II – when the world's two superpowers began to engage in the spiraling arms race of the Cold War.

"On January 7, 1954, President Eisenhower delivered his first State of the Union address to the Nation. After declaring that 'American freedom is threatened so long as the Communist conspiracy exists in its present scope, power and hostility' the President outlined his plans for defending the Nation against that threat. 'We will not be aggressors,' he said, 'but we... have and will maintain a massive capability to strike back.' Eisenhower's comments reflected the doctrinal basis behind much of America's strategic planning during the Cold War era. (It also proved that Ike should have listened to Patton.)

"President Eisenhower's view of the Soviet Union was similar to one that had been articulated nearly eight years earlier by George Kennan, a diplomat at the US embassy in Moscow. Watching the Soviets surround themselves with a 'buffer zone' that included much of Eastern Europe following World War II, Kennan had argued that these moves resulted from a fanatical Soviet 'expansionism' that was ultimately bent on disrupting American society, destroying the American way of life, and breaking the international authority of America. The only way to deal with this threat, Kennan suggested, was for

the United States to adopt a policy of 'patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies.'

"Although good in theory, containment proved nearly impossible to put into practice. In order to truly contain the pervasive Soviet threat, observed one top US official in 1954, the Nation would need to prepare for combat 'in the Arctic and in the tropics; in Asia, in the near East and in Europe; by sea, by land, and by air.' But while the Soviet Union had mounted a massive effort to rebuild its army and replenish conventional weapons after World War II, America had demobilized at a dizzying rate. Exploiting its position as the sole possessor of the atomic bomb, the United States pursued what some observers called a 'bargain-basement' defense policy, using nuclear weapons as stand-ins for foot soldiers. (Is that anything like a Peace Dividend?)

"Fiscally conservative, President Eisenhower also wanted to keep America's atomic arsenal to the minimum amount necessary to deter Moscow. The President and his chief economic advisor, Arthur H. Burns, believed that the Federal government needed to cut spending, reduce taxes, and balance the budget in order to achieve steady economic growth. Despite protests from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Eisenhower continually pressed for large cuts in military spending, which consumed almost 70% of the national budget at the time he took office in 1953.

"American military planners began developing ballistic missiles immediately after World War II. But by the late 1940s, America's missile program began to languish, largely because the Nation's nuclear superiority seemed secure. In 1949, when the Soviet Union developed its atomic bomb, America responded with an even more powerful weapon – a thermonuclear device that used a small atomic trigger to initiate a fusion reaction in hydrogen isotopes. Successfully tested in 1952, the H-bomb seemed to guarantee America's nuclear superiority. But in August 1953, the Soviets exploded their own H-bomb, and many US military experts also believed that the Soviets could deliver their new weapon via an ICBM. For the first time, the Soviets seemed poised to take the lead in the arms race.

"Following the Soviet's successful H-bomb test, two independent US organizations reevaluated the strategic importance of ICBMs to national security. As Dr. Bruno Augenstein of the RAND Corporation observed, 'If the Soviet Union beat the United States in a race for the ICBM, the consequences would be catastrophic.' An Air Force committee headed by Dr. John von Neumann, a Princeton University mathematics professor, also assessed the arms race. Code-named the 'Teapot Committee', von Neumann's group investigated 'the impact of the thermonuclear [bomb] on the development of strategic missiles and the possibility that the Soviet Union might be somewhat ahead of the United States.' In February 1954, RAND and the Teapot Committee released their reports, both of which reached the same conclusion: recent advances in thermonuclear technology made an ICBM practical. Furthermore, an ICBM 'could be developed and deployed early enough to counter the pending Soviet threat if exceptional talents, adequate funds and new management techniques suited to the urgency of the situation were authorized.'

“By May 1954, the Air Force had mapped out a development plan for the new weapon. In June, Vice Chief of Staff General Thomas D. White ordered the Air Research and Development Command ‘to proceed with the development of an ICBM at the highest speed possible, limited only by the advancement of technology in the various fields concerned.’ In July, the Air Force established a special project office to administer the program. Based on the West Coast, the new agency was consequently called the Western Development Division. Bernard A. Schriever, a 43-year-old brigadier general, headed Western Development Division. The Air Force expected the newly-promoted young general to place a fully operational ICBM weapon system into the hands of the Strategic Air Command within six years. The Air Force considered Western Development Division’s mission so important to national security that even its initials, WDD, were classified beyond top secret.

“On August 5, 1954, General Schriever and a small group of military officers converged on an abandoned parochial school in the Los Angeles suburb of Inglewood to begin their work. To avoid arousing the curiosity of nearby residents, the officers wore civilian clothes. Journalist Roy Neal, who chronicled the development of the Minuteman missile system, described what they found:

‘No sign identified the white schoolhouse as the Western Development Division. . . . The windows were frosted and heavily barred. All outside doors, except one, were locked. The only entrance was across a chain-link fenced parking lot. A security guard manned the door... Some of the old-timers recall . . . the comment of the school boy who was sauntering by the school building.

‘Eying the frosted glass and steel-barred windows, he said to a chum, “Boy am I glad I don’t go to school here.”’

“In this inconspicuous but carefully secured setting, the hand-picked staff of the Western Development Division began the effort to build an intercontinental ballistic missile.

“The Western Development Division staff began its work by reviving a missile project that had originated shortly after World War II. In 1946, the Air Force had contracted with the Convair Corporation to design a long-range ballistic missile called the MX-774. Like many post-war missile projects, the MX-774 lost most of its government funding after only one year. But, instead of dropping the project, Convair Corporation continued working on its own, steadily advancing the state of missile technology. In 1951, the Air Force acknowledged these efforts by hiring the company to develop plans for a more advanced missile, called the Atlas.

“The Atlas was essentially a highly evolved version of the German V-2 missile, which Germany had used against the Allies during the waning years of World War II. Like the V-2, the Atlas was powered by rocket engines that burned a mixture of liquid fuel and oxidizer. But while the V-2 had an effective range of only a few hundred miles, the Atlas had to deliver its payload to a target more than 5,000 miles away. Convair Corporation

could have met this requirement by designing the Atlas as an enormous version of the V-2. Instead, Convair's engineers sought a more sophisticated solution. Realizing that a missile's range could be increased by reducing its weight, Convair equipped the Atlas with an innovative, ultra-light airframe. Convair assembled the missile from rings of paper-thin stainless steel, stacked together like stovepipes and welded at the seams to form cylinders. The cylinders were then inflated with nitrogen gas to give the missile its structural integrity.

"By 1954, the Atlas was the Nation's most advanced ballistic missile. Nonetheless, the missile was years away from production. No prototype had been flight tested, and some skeptics feared that when Atlas's powerful engines were fired for the first time, the missile's thin-skinned airframe would buckle in on itself, leaving America's hopes for an ICBM lying on the launch pad like a gigantic ball of tin foil.

"General Schriever and his staff were aware of these concerns. So while they proceeded with the Atlas program, they also looked for a backup. In October 1955, the Air Force contracted with the Glenn L. Martin Company to produce a new ICBM called the Titan. Like the Atlas, the Titan used liquid propellants, but its advanced two-stage design allowed for a conventional, and more reliable, airframe.

"Still, America's missile program was hampered by funding problems. In 1956, Air Force Secretary Donald Quarles rejected the operational budget for the ICBM program, and proposed the elimination of either Atlas or Titan, which he considered redundant. That same year, the Air Force lost its most effective missile proponent when Assistant Secretary Trevor Gardner, the 'Missile Czar', announced his retirement, citing continued cuts to his missile research and development budgets. Undeterred by Gardner's retirement, Quarles's austerity campaign continued into 1957 when the ballistic missile program was slashed by \$200 million. In July, the Eisenhower administration initiated even more cost-saving measures, including cutting missile deliveries, lowering overtime rates, and delaying payments to contractors.

"This frugal economic climate changed dramatically after Sputnik. In October 1957, when the Soviet Union announced it had used a liquid-fueled ICBM to launch Sputnik into orbit, American scientists and politicians feared a significant 'missile gap'. Within months, journalists and intelligence analysts began asserting that the Soviet missile force could outnumber the American arsenal by as much as 16 to 1 by 1960. America's growing sense of insecurity was not lost on Soviet officials, who gleefully announced that their factories were turning out missiles 'like sausages'. Facing severe criticism for allowing the United States to fall behind in the arms race, the Eisenhower administration poured more money into its missile programs – increasing the Nation's annual space research and development budget by more than twenty-fold within six months after Sputnik. The administration also highlighted the development of the Atlas and Titan missiles. One government spokesperson noted that America's missile program was being carefully designed, first to 'attain perfection', and then to 'develop the ability to produce in volume once that perfection is achieved'.

“But America’s first-generation ICBMs were neither perfect nor mass-producible. A few weeks after Sputnik, the Wall Street Journal observed that the weaknesses of America’s ICBMs ‘are so profound that... generals are sure [the missiles] will be discarded altogether after the first half-dozen years.’ Atlas and Titan were extraordinarily complex, handcrafted machines, containing as many as 300,000 parts, each of which had to be maintained in perfect operating condition. The liquid propellants that powered the missiles’ engines were volatile and corrosive, and could not be placed in the fuel tanks until immediately before launch. In addition, the missile crews needed as much as two hours to fuel the missiles. Consequently, instead of being ‘stable weapons in a state of permanent readiness’, these ICBMs required ‘the desperate and constant attention accorded a man receiving artificial respiration’. The missiles were not a ‘push button affair but will require a highly-trained crew... several times as large as the largest bombing crew’. Many of these problems could be solved, the Wall Street Journal suggested, by developing a simplified ‘second generation’ of missiles powered by solid-fuel rocket engines.

“A lot of work had been done on solids prior to the initiation of the ICBM program in 1954’, recalled General Schriever in a 1973 interview, ‘but there were a number of things that ruled against using solids at that time’. Solid propellants in the mid-1950s could not provide enough power to hurl a thermonuclear warhead across an ocean. Also, solids were difficult to manufacture. They were hard to ignite, and there was no way to control their combustion or direct their thrust after ignition. Given these constraints, the Air Force believed that liquid-fueled missiles were ‘the only immediate way to go ahead’. But the Air Force did not entirely abandon the concept of a solid-fuel missile. In 1956, Schriever reluctantly approved a low-level research program ‘aimed toward the evolution of a high-thrust... solid-fuel rocket’. Schriever selected Colonel Edward Hall, Chief of Propulsion Development for the Western Development Division, to head the program. According to historian Robert Perry, Hall was a ‘near-fanatic’ about the potential of solid-fuel missiles.

“Colonel Edward Hall and his staff of engineers diligently researched their solid-fuel missile program. Within two years, Hall’s group had solved most of the problems associated with solid-fuel rocket engines. In August 1957, the Air Force asked Hall to develop a medium-range, solid-fuel missile to be the land-based counterpart to the Navy’s submarine-launched, solid-fuel Polaris. Within two weeks, Hall drew up specifications for a remarkable new missile whose range could be varied by simply assembling its three interchangeable propulsion stages in different combinations.

“The new missile, dubbed ‘Weapon System Q’, was ‘the first strategic weapon capable of true mass production’, wrote Duke University historian George Reed. ‘To Hall, the new missile was the perfect weapon for a defense policy characterized by minimum expenditure and massive retaliation; and he urged that this be its chief selling point’. Sputnik made it easy for Colonel Hall to make the sale. A few days after the Sputnik launch, Hall went to the Pentagon with General Schriever to build support for the new missile. As they ascended the ranks of the military hierarchy, Hall refined his plans. By the end of 1957, he determined that ‘the ICBM version of Weapon System Q would be a three-stage, solid-fuel missile approximately 65 feet long, weighing approximately 65,000

pounds, and developing approximately 100,000-120,000 pounds of thrust at launch'. The missile would be stored vertically in underground silos and 'would accelerate so quickly that it could fly through its exhaust flames and not be significantly damaged'.

"In February 1958, Hall and Schriever presented Weapon System Q to the Secretaries of the Air Force and Defense. 'We got approval... within 48 hours', Schriever recalled. The officers immediately renamed the project. On February 28, 1958, the New York Times reported that the Air Force had been authorized 'to produce an advanced type of ballistic missile... called Minute Man'.

"By the end of March 1958, at least seven of the Nation's foremost aircraft manufacturers, including the Boeing Airplane Company, were competing to build the new missile. Although Seattle-based Boeing had built many of the Nation's largest strategic bombers, the company had virtually no experience with missiles. Still, Boeing mounted an all-out effort to win the Minuteman contract, assigning more than 100 employees to work on the project. When the Air Force selection board met to examine the proposals, one top official recalled that "there was no question... that Boeing was the right company for the job." In October 1958, the US government contracted with Boeing to assemble and test the new missile.

"During the next few months, the rest of the Minuteman missile team came into place. The Thiokol Chemical Company of Brigham City, Utah, the Aerojet General Corporation of Sacramento, California, and the Hercules Powder Company of Magna, Utah, all won contracts to work on the missile's propulsion stages. Minuteman's guidance and control systems went to the Autonetics Division of North American Aviation in Downey, California. The AVCO Corporation of Boston contracted to build the missile's thermonuclear warhead.

"Much of the development work for Minuteman took place in northern Utah. Thiokol and Hercules already operated plants in the area and, within a few months, Boeing moved into a new assembly plant that occupied 790 acres at Hill Air Force Base near Ogden. By the beginning of 1960, Boeing's Minuteman work force had grown to nearly 12,000, as the company started to assemble the missiles. Time magazine reported that the desert north of Salt Lake was 'boiling' with activity:

"Strange lights glare in the night, making the mountains shine, and a grumbling roar rolls across the desert. By day enormous clouds of steam-white smoke billow up... and drift over hills and valleys. Monstrous vehicles with curious burdens lumber along the roads.

"All these strange goings-on mark the development of the Minuteman; the solid fuel missile that its proponents confidently expect will ultimately replace the liquid fuel Atlas as the US's standard ICBM.

"According to journalist Roy Neal, the ICBM program created a new national industry:

'Tens of thousands of industrial and Air Force managers, engineers, and workers [had] to be trained. New machine tools and test facilities [had to] come into being...' These efforts changed 'the face of America, the make-up of the Armed Forces and the industries that support them'.

"At the end of 1960, the Air Force took the first Minuteman missile to Cape Canaveral, Florida, for flight testing. The compact new missile was only six feet in diameter and 53 feet high – about half the size of a Titan. Minuteman's three cylindrical, steel-cased propulsion stages were stacked one atop the other, with each stage slightly smaller in diameter than the one beneath it. Each stage was filled with a rubbery mixture of fuel and oxidizer, molded around a hollow, star-shaped core. The Minuteman's guidance system occupied a small compartment above the third stage. The 'reentry vehicle' at the tip was identical to the nose-cone that would eventually contain a thermonuclear warhead.

"Following two aborted launch attempts, the Air Force successfully fired the first Minuteman missile at 11:00 am on February 1, 1961. Even the most experienced missile watchers found it to be 'a dazzling spectacle'. When the missile's first-stage engine ignited, there was a loud bang. Then the missile began to rise on a column of flame and smoke. Unlike the Atlas or Titan missile, which one observer said left the ground 'like a fat man getting out of an easy chair', the Minuteman missile 'shot up like a skyrocket'. The missile performed flawlessly. The three propulsion stages completed their burns on schedule, then detached themselves and plummeted back to earth, while the unarmed warhead hurled on toward its assigned destination. Twenty-five minutes after lift-off, the reentry vehicle splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean squarely on target – 4,600 miles away.

"From his office in Washington DC, Air Force Chief of Staff General Thomas D. White described the launch as 'one of the most significant steps this Nation has ever taken toward gaining intercontinental missile supremacy'. An engineer who witnessed the event put it another way: 'Brother', he said, 'there goes the missile gap'.

"By the time the flight test took place, the Air Force was already planning for Minuteman missile deployment. According to historian Jacob Neufeld, the Air Force conceptually developed its 'ideal' ICBM base in 1955, during the early days of the Atlas program:

"The missile would be sited inside fixed, underground facilities; it was to have a quick launch reaction; it was to be stored in a launching position; the launch site would require minimal support; and the launch units were to be self-supporting for two weeks.

"Turning these ideas into reality, however, proved difficult. During the height of the 'missile gap' hysteria, the Air Force hastily activated the Nation's first Atlas missiles at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. Here, the Air Force stored the missiles horizontally in 'coffins' – concrete-walled, above-ground enclosures. Before the missiles could be fired, servicemen had to raise each missile vertically on a launch pad and add fuel. The later Titan and Atlas F series missiles were stored upright in underground silos capped with massive "clamshell" doors. But Air Force engineers were worried that vibrations

from the rocket engines might shake the missiles apart before launch. As a result, the Air Force equipped each silo with an elevator that raised the missile to the surface for firing. Although the missiles were stored with their tanks full of fuel, workers still needed to add volatile liquid oxygen right before launch.

“The Air Force took a major step toward achieving its ideal basing system in 1960 with the development of Titan II, which used storable liquid propellants. The Air Force could store Titan II missiles with fully-loaded propellant tanks, and fire them directly from underground silos. Nonetheless, Titan II missiles still needed constant attention from an on-site crew.

“When Minuteman was added to the Nation’s arsenal, America acquired its first truly pushbutton – literally turn-key – missile system. Historian Ernest Schwiebert noted:

‘With the successful utilization of solid propellants, the Minuteman could hide in its lethal lair like a shotgun shell, ready for instant firing. The operational launcher could be unmanned, underground, and hardened to withstand the surface burst of a nuclear weapon. Each launcher housed a single weapon and the equipment necessary to support and fire it, and required only periodic maintenance. The missiles could be fired ... at a moment’s notice’.

“The Air Force wanted to deploy Minuteman as a single, immense, ‘missile farm’, equipped with as many as 1,500 missiles. However, the Air Force soon determined that ‘for reasons of economy 150 launchers should be concentrated in a single area, whenever possible, and that no area should contain fewer than 50 missiles’.

“Consequently, the Air Force organized the Minuteman force into a series of administrative units called ‘wings’, each comprised of three or four 50-missile squadrons. Each squadron was further subdivided into five smaller units, called ‘flights’. A flight consisted of a single, manned, launch control facility, linked to ten, unmanned, underground, missile silos. The silos were separated from the launch control facility and from each other by a distance of several miles.

“The Air Force initially considered putting Minuteman missiles as far south as Georgia, Texas, and Oklahoma. But when early models of Minuteman missiles fell short of their intended 5,500-mile range, the Air Force selected sites in the northern part of the United States, which was closer to the Soviet Union. In 1960, the Air Force decided to locate the first Minuteman installation on the high plains around Great Falls, Montana, at Malmstrom AFB. In the event of a nuclear accident or attack, the low population density near Malmstrom AFB would minimize civilian casualties. In addition, the region offered an established network of roads and, like much of the West, a large amount of easy-to-acquire public land.

“The Air Force began constructing the Nation’s first Minuteman missile field on March 16, 1961. In the spring of 1962, the Associated Press reported that the Montana silos were being ‘rushed to completion’, and that the first missiles, each loaded with ‘one

megaton of death and destruction', would be ready by late summer. Air Force crews began lowering the weapons into the silos at the end of July, and Malmstrom AFB's first ten-missile flight was hurriedly activated on October 27, 1962, at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

"Military strategists began planning for a second Minuteman installation shortly after work got underway at Malmstrom AFB. In June 1960, the Air Force was authorized to add another 150 missiles to the Minuteman force. By early October, military strategists had narrowed their search for a new site to three locations in North and South Dakota. On January 5, 1961, US Senator Francis Case of South Dakota announced that Ellsworth AFB would be the headquarters for the Nation's second Minuteman deployment. Located about 12 miles east of Rapid City, Ellsworth AFB was founded in 1941 as the Rapid City Army Air Base. The Air Corps used the airfield to train B-17 bomber crews, and Ellsworth eventually served as home base for many of America's largest strategic bombers. The base was also headquarters for a Titan I missile squadron.

"Although the Defense Department had not yet officially authorized the South Dakota Minuteman installation, Senator Case wanted the land acquired immediately so there would be 'no loss of valuable time' once the project was approved. Local ranchers did not share Case's sense of urgency. Fearing that the government might offer below-market prices for their land, the ranchers established the Missile Area Landowners' Association to negotiate fair prices. The association assured fellow citizens that its actions would 'not necessarily slow the national defense effort'.

"While real estate negotiations were underway, the South Dakota State Highway Department spent \$650,000 from the Federal Bureau of Public Roads to improve 327 miles of roads leading to the proposed missile sites. By June 1961, Boeing was busy improving the infrastructure. Anticipating that the project would bring in more than 3,000 workers, the company raced to build mobile home camps and cafeterias near Wall, Sturgis, Belle Fourche, and Union Center, as well as in Rapid City.

"By early summer, more than three-quarters of the local landowners agreed to give the government access to their land. Once the sites were finalized, the Ralph M. Parsons Company, an architectural and engineering firm from Los Angeles, prepared plans for the Minuteman installation. The Air Force assigned responsibility for construction to the US Army Corps of Engineers Ballistic Missile Construction Office. In July 1961, four of the nation's largest construction firms submitted bids for the project. The low bid came from Peter Kiewit Sons Company of Omaha, whose estimate of \$56,220,274 was nearly \$10 million below government projections.

"On September 10, 1961, the groundbreaking ceremony for Ellsworth AFB's Minuteman installations took place at Site L-6 near Bear Butte. The festivities started with a bang. While the Sturgis High School band played, representatives from Boeing, Kiewit, the Corps of Engineers, and Ellsworth AFB set off an explosive charge to begin the excavation.

“Despite extreme cold, high winds, and heavy snowfall, construction proceeded at a furious pace through the winter of 1961-62. In mid-December, the Corps of Engineers told reporters that ‘men are working seven days a week, three shifts a day on Minuteman construction’. A Corps spokesman said that crews were ‘able to dig five silo emplacements simultaneously. Each takes from four to ten days...’ The first squadron, near Wall, was well underway, said the Corps, and work on the second squadron, near Union Center, had already started. In February 1962, General Delmar Wilson told the Rapid City Chamber of Commerce that despite an ongoing labor dispute between Peter Kiewit Sons and the Ironworkers Union, South Dakota’s ICBM deployment suffered fewer work stoppages than any missile program in the Nation. ‘We’re all out... to assure that our way of life is maintained’, stated Wilson. ‘This missile project... is the number one project in the country today. If this guy in Russia wants to start a show, we’ll be there to put a hole in him to the best of our ability’.

“By early summer of 1963, the steel fabrication was finished at all 165 South Dakota sites, and crews were completing the silos at the rate of one per day. On the last day of June, the first 20 silos were turned over to the Strategic Air Command. On October 23, the Nation’s second wing of Minuteman ICBMs was fully operational. The work was completed nearly three weeks ahead of schedule.

“While the Ellsworth AFB sites were under construction, the Air Force was building several other Minuteman installations. By the end of 1967, the Nation had 1,000 Minuteman missiles on alert in six separate deployment areas located throughout the north-central United States. In addition to the original installations at Malmstrom AFB and Ellsworth AFB, Minuteman complexes were deployed at Minot AFB and Grand Forks AFB in North Dakota, Whiteman AFB in Missouri, and F.E. Warren AFB in Wyoming. In addition, another squadron was established at Malmstrom AFB. At each installation the Air Force continued to improve and refine the Minuteman operational system.

“Newly-elected President John F. Kennedy instigated one of the first significant improvements to the Minuteman weapon system. Soon after taking office in 1961, Kennedy learned that even if he ordered a massive nuclear retaliation to a Soviet attack, a portion of the Soviet’s long-range nuclear force would survive to strike again. As a consequence, the Kennedy administration quickly abandoned the strategic policy of releasing America’s entire nuclear arsenal in ‘one horrific spasm’. Instead of massive retaliation, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara recommended a ‘flexible response’. Should deterrence fail, McNamara proposed that America’s nuclear weapons be deployed selectively. The first ICBMs would target enemy bombers and missile sites. The remaining ICBMs would be held in reserve, for potential use against Soviet cities. McNamara hoped that the threat to the civilian population would persuade the Soviet Union to end the conflict. McNamara began retooling America’s nuclear forces, including Minuteman, to reflect the new military strategy.

“However, Colonel Edward Hall and his engineers designed Minuteman to be a fast reacting, mass-attack weapon. Upon receiving the launch command, the officers at each Minuteman facility had to fire all ten missiles under their control. A selective launch of

fewer than ten missiles was impossible. In order to conform with the new defense strategy, Air Force engineers had to redesign Minuteman's launch control complex. Historian Clyde Littlefield described the changes:

'In order to conform to the new concept, engineering changes had to be made to allow a combat crew in a control center to switch targets and to fire one or more missiles selectively, conserving the remainder for later use.... Greater flexibility in targeting and firing required a significant extension to the limited survival time [of each operational site]. The [original] Minuteman facility design did not provide for the protection of the power supply.... At a control center, power generators were above the ground.... When and if these generators stopped functioning, the operational potential of the system would be reduced to only six hours. Revised strategic concepts required that the weapon survive at least nine weeks after an initial enemy attack.

'To meet this requirement, the Air Force put the generators in underground capsules next to each launch control center. Although the Air Force considered incorporating these generators into the Minuteman facilities at Ellsworth AFB, construction was already underway there, making the changes impractical. Consequently, the generator capsules began with the third Minuteman deployment area at Minot AFB in North Dakota'.

"By the time planning began for the final Minuteman deployment area, the Air Force had developed a vastly improved version of the missile. Called Minuteman II, the new missile offered improved range, greater payload, more flexible targeting, and greater accuracy; leading one Air Force spokesperson to estimate that its 'kill capacity' was eight times that of Minuteman I. Minuteman II was deployed first at Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota. In September 1965, South Dakota Congressman E.Y. Berry announced that the Ellsworth AFB facilities would also receive the new missile system. According to Berry, Minuteman II would help Ellsworth AFB remain 'one of the nation's most important military installations'. In October 1971, Boeing began refitting the Ellsworth silos to accommodate Minuteman II, and completed the project in March 1973.

"In May 1964, the Soviet Union displayed a battery of anti-ballistic missiles in Moscow's Red Square, prompting concern about the vulnerability of Minuteman I and II missiles. The following year, the Air Force began to develop an even more advanced version of the missile. By late summer of 1968, Minuteman III was ready for testing. Longer and more powerful than its predecessors, Minuteman III offered an improved guidance system that could be retargeted in minutes. But, according to the New York Times, the missile's 'most telling advantage' lay in its 'revolutionary new warhead: the MIRV, or multiple independently targeted reentry vehicle'. The MIRV could deliver three hydrogen bombs to widely scattered targets, a capability that would 'render current and contemplated antimissile defense systems largely inadequate', and 'thrust the world into a new era of weapons for mass destruction'.

"The Air Force deployed Minuteman III at Warren, Minot, Grand Forks, and Malmstrom Air Force Bases, and extensively modified the Minuteman launchers at these locations

to accommodate the new missiles. Each launch tube was equipped with a new suspension system that could hold the missile absolutely motionless during the aftershocks of a nuclear attack. The Air Force also installed a system of seals, filters, and surge arrestors designed to prevent electronic equipment from being damaged by the powerful electromagnetic waves generated during nuclear explosions.

“In July 1975, when the last of the Nation’s 550 Minuteman III missiles was lowered into its silo at Malmstrom AFB, Montana, only 450 Minutemen II remained in the American arsenal – at Malmstrom, Ellsworth, and Whiteman Air Force Bases. This force structure remained intact for nearly two more decades.

“The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War. On July 31, 1991, President George Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which placed a limit on the worldwide number of ICBMs and prescribed a process for their destruction. The treaty coincided with the end of the Cold War, and the Air Force’s growing disenchantment with the escalating costs of repairing and maintaining the Minuteman II system. On September 27, 1991, President Bush announced on national television his ‘plan for peace’. As part of the plan, Bush called for ‘the withdrawal from alert, within 72 hours’, of all 450 Minuteman II missiles, including those at Ellsworth AFB.

“On December 3, 1991, an Air Force crew arrived to remove the first of Ellsworth AFB’s 150 Minuteman II missiles: Golf Two (G-2), a launch facility near Red Owl, about 60 miles northeast of Rapid City. The Rapid City Daily Journal reported on the crew’s progress.

“Disarmament began with snow shovels at dawn... as Airman 1st Class James Comfort and his colleagues cleared the launch-door rail.... Six hours later, a Minuteman II intercontinental ballistic missile was stored safely in its transporter/erector truck. G-2 was just a high-tech hole in the ground.

“According to the Rapid City Daily Journal, the Minuteman deactivation process at Ellsworth AFB would continue for at least three more years:

‘First, warheads and guidance systems [will be] removed. Then the missiles will be pulled... The headframes of the missile silos will be destroyed and the tubes will be filled with rubble. The launch control capsules will be buried under rubble and a thick concrete cap. The land and above-ground buildings at launch control centers will be sold.

‘Although all of the Minuteman II facilities at Ellsworth AFB were slated for demolition, the Air Force, in conjunction with the National Park Service, selected two representative sites – Launch Control Facility Delta One and Launch Facility Delta Nine – for possible preservation as nationally significant icons of the Cold War. When the Minuteman II deactivation is completed in the mid-1990s, these two Ellsworth AFB sites will be the only remaining intact examples of the original Minuteman configuration.’“

“What did you do grandpa?”

“The first successful test fire of the third stage engine for the Minuteman III missile was conducted on San Nicolas Island during 1964. Prior to that time, all of the nozzle throats eroded. I worked on that engine with a piece of sandpaper.”

“Sandpaper?”

“Yes, sandpaper. We had to mount strain gauges on the engine case. I didn’t know at the time that that case was made of titanium. It wasn’t machined smooth and the stain gauges wouldn’t stick unless it was smooth. So, so for weeks on end, I sat the trailer where they were storing the rocket motor and tried to sand smooth spots in titanium. I must have succeeded; none of the stain gauges came loose when we fired the motor. I don’t know if that was the final engine design that Morton Thiokol used, but that engine or one very much like it, ended up on the Minuteman III missile. That’s what we launched in retaliation to the attack, 450 Minuteman III missiles and a bunch of D-5s.”

“So let me get this right, you sanded the case of a Minuteman III 3rd stage engine?”

“That’s it, Aaron.”

“Was it important?”

“The case didn’t blow up so I don’t think so. That data would have only been used if the titanium case failed.”

We spent another 100 days in the shelter and when it was time, we left. We had a few arguments; the strain of two involuntary incarcerations was pretty tough on some. Derek spent most of his time sharpening knives. Anyone need a shave?

“What’s the reading?”

“98mR. Be sure to wear a warm coat, it’s cold out there.”

Silent Running – Chapter 12

*Mm dooby do, dahm dahm, dahm do dahm ooby do
Dahm dahm, dahm do dahm, ooby do
Dahm dahm, dahm do dahm, ooby do
Dahm dahm, dahm ooh dahm
Mm dooby do*

*(Come softly, darling)
(Come softly, darling)
(Come softly, darling)
(Come softly, darling)*

*(Come softly, darling)
(Come to me, sta-ay)
(You're my ob-session)
(Forever and a da-ay)*

*I want, want you to kno-o-ow
I love, I love you so
Please hold, hold me so tight
All through, all through the night..*

*(Speak softly, darling)
(Hear what I sa-ay)
(I love you always)
(Always, always)*

*I've waited, waited so long
For your kisses and your love
Please come, come to me
From up, from up above*

*(Come softly, darling)
(Come softly, darling)
I need, need you so much
Wanna feel your wa-arm touch*

*Mm dooby do, dahm dahm, dahm do dahm ooby do
Dahm dahm, dahm do dahm, ooby do
Dahm dahm, dahm do dahm, ooby do
Dahm dahm, dahm ooh dahm*

*Mm dooby do, dahm dahm, dahm do dahm ooby do
Dahm dahm, dahm do dahm, ooby do
Dahm dahm, dahm do dahm, ooby do*

Dahm dahm, dahm ooh dahm

o

I'll leave it to you to figure it out. They were from Olympia, Washington, two gals and a guy. They were the first to record Mr. Blue. One of the airmen in my unit, at Edwards AFB, went to high school with them. (Come Softly)

"Houston, we have a problem."

"What now?"

"The plates won't slide back."

"There're a couple of propane torches in the utility room, try heating it."

"Do you have more bottles of propane?"

"A case. If that's not enough, I guess we'll stay for a while."

"Got it. That sheet of plywood with the stack of firewood on top won't move."

"Get a drill and drill a hole. Then take my saber saw and cut out a 3' square section. Be careful, the wood will probably fall in. Then you can put up the step ladder and crawl out."

I was a Star Trek fan and believe there was no such thing as a no win scenario. You'll see what I mean when we begin to deal with the aftermath of WW III. It took the better part of the day to egress the shelter. Damon, Derek and Aaron took turns shoveling the snow and I supervised. Once we were able to get into the house, we brought the ladies upstairs and Sharon made a quick list of things to bring up from the shelter. We got fires going in all 3 fireplaces to help warm the house. I didn't want to burn anymore propane than we had to.

"We need a snowmobile."

"Damon, Derek says we need 3 snowmobiles."

"Do they sell snowmobiles in Texas?"

"How the hell would I know, I'm from Iowa. I think they must, Paris gets snow from time to time. How much snow is there?"

"About 3'."

"I thought we'd get more than that. Do you think the Jeep would get through it?"

“I doubt it. It’s 8 miles to Paris and we don’t know if we would find a snowmobile if we could get there. What do you want to do?”

“Have a cup of coffee, eat dinner and call it a day. We might find a dealer further north, but without snowmobiles, we aren’t going anywhere. I know that none of us have skis or snowshoes. Or, do you have a better idea?”

o

It was April before the roads were clear enough to get to Paris. The REA had managed to get the power back on part time as a birthday present for me. It was on starting at 5pm for 4 hours. The phone wasn’t on and wasn’t expected to be restored for long distance, local calls might be up by spring. We needed biodiesel, snowmobiles (?), food; let’s face it, we needed a miracle.

Four months had passed since the war, leaving us 8 months to find the things we needed. Plus, the weather was changing, it was rapidly warming. We all worked to put in a big garden using most of the available space. That done, we strung garden netting to shade the plants from the very bright sun. Because I couldn’t get out and help the boys, I stayed home and hoed the garden. That never ended, by the time I got to one end, it was time to start over.

Meanwhile, they had the list of things we needed and places to go. For all my talk about E-85, we didn’t have enough land to grow enough of any crop to turn into alcohol. Instead, they searched for diesel and gas. They also searched for the staples we couldn’t produce and things like more toilet paper. Weapons weren’t on their list, but ammo was. It seemed like where you find one, you often find the other. They were out looking one day when the military, not the National Guard, the real live military, showed up asking for our papers.

“Can’t you just waive that do-dad over our arm?”

“Oh, we will, after we see your papers.”

“You mean the federal approved state driver’s license?”

“I mean your Internal Passport and your travel papers plus you state driver’s license or identity card.”

“Why?”

“To verify your identity and make sure your papers are in order.”

“And if I refuse?”

“Hey Sarge, we got another of them.”

“Got another what?”

“Patriot, right? You’ve got a closet full of guns, 20,000 rounds of ammo and enough food and fuel to last at least a year.”

“I do not. I have what food is left in the house, no guns, no ammo and my generator ran out of gas.”

“Where is your generator?”

“Traded to a guy for some food. It was just a little 7kw generator I bought at Costco in Lancaster.”

“According to our records, you have several firearms.”

“I unloaded those at a gun show. Hang on and I’ll get my papers.”

“We have to see everyone who is living here.”

“Can you come in the house, it getting hot out?”

“Might just as well, we have to search your house.”

“Where’s your warrant?”

“Don’t need one; EO 14302 suspends the 4th Amendment to permit searches for firearms. Did you fill out forms when you transferred the guns?”

“No.”

“Then we have to search.”

“Well, you’ve got guns and I don’t. I suppose that means I don’t have much choice.”

“You can refuse to let us search.”

“And?”

“We’ll arrest you and search anyway. Is everyone who lives here present?”

“My boys are out trying to trade some goods for more food and fuel.”

“I hope they didn’t go far, there are travel restrictions in effect.”

o

Since when did patriot become a dirty word? We were keeping just enough food in the house for one day. All the guns and ammo, except for one, were in the shelter. Well, that's not true, Aaron went with Damon and Derek and they had their guns and Aaron had my Super Match. Man, you ought to see that kid shoot! These guys were wearing Interceptor Body Armor, my .32 would just bounce off. I played dumb, but we'd had a radio call about 10 minutes before they'd shown up. It was in code, 'Katie bar the door, here come the Indians', but I knew what it meant. If they knew how to move the firewood, the weapons were on a tarp at the top of the ramp.

First they checked everyone's papers and then they scanned the chips. Finally, they searched the house and didn't find a thing. I'm glad they didn't check the circuit breaker; Sharon had turned off the master breaker when they arrived. They put stamps on our travel documents that said, "Valid in Lamar County Only". They said we could check in Paris if we needed to travel further, they consider a temporary extension to our travel permits.

I can't speak for you, but I was born in Kalifornia, raised in Iowa and never in my entire 68 years did I feel less like a citizen. I can remember when your driver's license didn't have your picture on it, let alone conform to federal standards. I can remember when the only time you needed a Passport was if you planned to travel to another country, not county. Hell, I remember when you could have a whole house full of food, provided you could afford it. Before it was over, I was red as a beet and thinking about my Nazi .32 in my rear waistband.

"Sit down Gary, before you have a stroke."

"Son-of-a-Bitch! Would you kids go finish weeding the garden?"

"Sure grandpa."

"How is our meat supply? I'll bet it is low, I'd better go hunting."

"We have plenty of meat."

"That's ok; you wouldn't want to eat anything I might shoot."

"What are you going to do?"

"Like I said, I'm going hunting."

"Hunting what?"

"Critters."

Those troops were driving a regular Hummer (M1038), not one with armor. I went to the shelter and got my rifle out of the armory, I assume you've been paying attention. I could only carry 5 mags, but 25 rounds were enough for the critters. They were next door, maybe ¼ mile away. I went across the road and walked the shoulder about ¼ mile. I slid back under cover and checked the silencer on my Tac-50. The primary way troops locate your location is the sound of your shots. There were only 4 of them compared to one of me. I had them outnumbered, they just didn't know it. My first shot hit the driver just below his Kraut Helmet. The Sergeant reached across the vehicle right into my line of fire. I got him in the neck, just above his shoulders.

The third soldier was standing next to the Hummer, providing cover for that idiot who said he'd arrest me. I took him center mass and he screamed, causing the first soldier to turn back towards the Hummer. He tried to bring his M-4 up but I don't think he knew where I was. Just as the carbine hit his shoulder, I loosed my 4th round. Remind me to thank Sgt. Baker for the Raufoss ammo.

There had been nobody home next door; apparently they'd gone to Paris. I struggled to get the 4 dead soldiers into the Hummer. I made sure I had their guns and ammo before I moved the dirt around to conceal the blood. When I got home, I unloaded all the guns, magazines and ammo and asked Mary to follow me while I disposed of the Hummer. I drove it about a mile from Paris and dumped it. Finally, I got in the car and we went home. At least, I was over being angry.

o

When Damon, Derek and Aaron got home, I filled them in. I told them to go on into Paris and get their papers stamped but not to take any guns with them, except for my Nazi .32.

"Where are the guys you shot?"

"About a mile out of Paris in a regular Hummer? Yeah, they pissed me off. Remind me the next time I go hunting to not take so many magazines. Forgive me for not getting up, I'm bushed. Did you have any trouble in town?"

"No, they checked our papers and stamped our Travel Permits. They say..."

"Valid in Lamar County Only. How'd you make out today?"

"We located a gun store that hadn't been ransacked and cleaned it out. We also located a semi and trailer that was about half full. We parked it in the clearing down the road and covered it with netting and rudimentary camouflage. The saddle tanks had about 180 gallons of diesel and the tank for the reefer another 60."

"What was in the trailer?"

“It was a Wal-Mart truck, so a bit of everything. What we can’t use, we’ll take to Paris for distribution. We’re in good shape on coffee, candy, batteries, assorted clothing and miscellaneous food items.”

“We’d better unload it tonight, I have a feeling the military will be back soon trying to follow the route their men took.”

“Why did you kill them?”

I went back over what happened, filling in the details I left out the first time. I made a point to emphasize the behavior of the man I had talked with and the search. I told them that he claimed there was an EO that allowed them to search a home without a warrant looking for firearms. I also told them about the warning call we got and how we hid the guns in the ramp. Finally, I detailed how I’d followed them and took them out.

“And you carried the rifle all the way to the neighbor’s place?”

“I was mad.”

“They’ll be back and really search this time.”

“Let ‘em, they won’t find anything. We obviously cooperated, we got the stamps and I sent the 3 of you to town to get your documents verified and stamped. They had a list of the guns I’d bought through dealers; I assume they collected the 4473s.”

“What about fingerprints?”

“I wore a pair of gardening gloves. The Tac-50 was on the list, I expected they come here first. Their weapons and ammo are in the shelter. Derek, you’d better check them out.”

“What did they have?”

“M4s. The Sergeant had an M9 too.”

“Why did you use the Tac-50?”

“Will a .308 penetrate an Interceptor Vest?”

“Good thinking, if a person can call what you did thinking. They’re going to hound us now, especially since you had a Tac-50.”

“Sold it to a fella at a gun show. And no, I don’t have any paperwork to prove it. Search all you want, it’s not here. You boys keep you’re weapons on the ramp, we might not be warned the next time they show up. Oh, and don’t tell anyone you’re a Patriot, that’s a dirty word now.”

o

They were here the next day. They asked about 1,000 questions and searched the house and the buildings. They came up empty, but it was apparent they weren't satisfied. I was waiting for them to slap cuffs on me when Derek showed the LT his military ID and pointed out that I used a wheelchair and could hardly walk. I don't know what all Derek said but when he was done, that LT was looking at me and shaking his head. I'm sure Derek added that I was senile, deaf, and didn't have long to live because of all my medical conditions that required medicine that we couldn't get.

"What did you tell that guy?"

"Whatever it took. I also explained that Damon, Aaron and I weren't here yesterday, but we went to town and had our papers examined and stamped. The LT wanted to know what happened to your guns and I told him that Sharon and you fell on hard times and that you sold them off one by one at various gun shows to buy food."

"That's ironic, Derek. That's exactly what happened to my first gun collection, except that I sold them to gun dealers. I'd give anything to have that collection back."

"Just hope they don't find the guns we have."

"There are people who know about the shelter. The contractor and his employees, the plumber, electrician and a few others. You can't have a structure built without somebody knowing something about it. I didn't have to record any building plans, but that contractor might have."

"I don't know about that Dad. I know that you'll be on a list of suspected terrorists. The LT told me that people who were formerly thought to be survivalists or patriots have been identified and they're keeping an eye on them. You were on the list because of all that Patriot Fiction you wrote."

"I never really wrote anything exciting. I got off on telling people how to prepare. I wasn't very good at writing action sequences."

"How did you get started on preparedness?"

"I was always into preparedness, but most of my life I wasn't very well prepared. That didn't really start until 2004 and it wasn't until 2006 that we actually began to get ready. You remember 2006, don't you? You spent 9 months in Iraq and back home I was reading the papers watching the world going to hell."

"You were probably watching Jericho on TV, too."

“Never missed an episode. Say was there really a private security firm named Blackwater?”

“There is, I checked out their website.”

“We have established a global presence and provide training and operational solutions for the 21st century in support of security and peace, and freedom and democracy everywhere.

“We customize and execute solutions for our clients to help keep them at the level of readiness required to meet today’s military, law enforcement, peacekeeping, and stability operations challenges. We continually prove to be faster, better, cheaper, and more efficient and effective than conventionally managed forces.

“Our customers include local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and most other federal agencies, multi-national corporations, non-governmental organizations, and friendly nations from around the world.

“Whether you require training, operational, or policy solutions, Blackwater can help you develop the right program for you to ensure success.

“We specialize in, but are not limited to:

- Basic and Advanced Law Enforcement and Military Training
- Design and Operation of Law Enforcement, Counterterrorism, and Military Training Facilities
- Counterterrorism, Antiterrorism, and Force Protection Programs
- Humanitarian, Peacekeeping, and Stability Operations
- Military Transformation Programs
- High-threat Security Operations (Ambassadors, Generals, CEOs, etc.)
- High-value Asset Security and Threat Assessment
- Fixed and Rotary-wing Aviation Operations and Logistics Programs
- Training Doctrine and Policy Development
- Foreign Internal Defense Missions
- Security Sector Reform

“Blackwater USA was employed to assist the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts on the Gulf Coast. According to a company press release, it provided airlift services, security services, humanitarian support services, and logistics and transportation services. Unofficial reports claim that the company also provided law enforcement services, such as securing neighborhoods and confronting criminals.”

“Here read this Dad; it’s the story of what Blackwater did in New Orleans.”

New Orleans – Every day, storm victims still line up at FEMA’s disaster relief centers. Time has only fueled their frustration.

It’s been nearly a year since Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, and huge swaths of New Orleans remain in rubble. Red tape, mix-ups or dead ends can easily trigger a boil-over.

The people who work for the Federal Emergency Management Agency usually catch the wrath.

“Let me put it to you this way,” says Gary Marratta, one of the agency’s security coordinators. “We used to go out in T-shirts with a big ‘FEMA’ across the back. We don’t do that anymore – ever since this one guy told me, ‘You know, that space between the ‘E’ and the ‘M’ makes a pretty good target.’”

Blackwater USA protects FEMA’s Katrina staff – a contract that has cost taxpayers \$73 million through the end of June, or about \$243,000 a day.

Tony Yates runs the Blackwater security crew assigned to a disaster relief center set up in the city’s downtown public library. FEMA’s workers at the library are mostly women – local teachers recruited after the storm destroyed their schools. They hunch over rows of laptops, interviewing applicants at long tables jammed between bookshelves. They’re not accustomed to the kind of rage that can come their way.

“Sometimes they see it building in the person they’re talking to,” Yates says, “but they’re too intimidated to call us over. So we keep an eye on body language.”

He also keeps an ear cocked for the code. This week, it’s “blue form.” If a worker raises her voice and asks for one, a Blackwater guard strolls over and hovers. One look at his sturdy presence – and the dull-black sheen of the 9 mm Glock on his hip – persuades most tough customers to rein it in. Two to three times a month, Yates says, someone leaves the library in handcuffs.

Mary Cornelius, the center’s director, looks up from her desk, watching as Yates makes his quiet rounds.

“I can’t tell you what it means to have them here,” Cornelius says. “A lot of people are at the end of their rope down here. We never know who’s going to walk in that door or what they have in mind.”

For battle-hardened Blackwater, New Orleans appears to be gravy work – at least at this point. It’s the tail end of a milestone mission: the private military company’s first domestic deployment – an undertaking that, at its height, employed close to 600 of the company’s contractors.

Blackwater's men were among the first outsiders to reach the Gulf Coast after the costliest hurricane in US history made landfall Aug. 29. The company's quick response led to a windfall of work, both government and commercial.

It also has affected the way disasters within the nation's borders will be dealt with in the future. Katrina woke Americans to the harsh fact that calamities can overwhelm even the government, and rescue can be a long time coming. Some people girding for the next one have already laid plans to hire their own deliverance from companies like Blackwater.

At first, Blackwater's arrival set off alarms in New Orleans. The company's work in Iraq has forged a soldier-of-fortune image, and nerves jangled when Blackwater's commando-types surfaced on the streets of Louisiana, outfitted with body armor and assault rifles.

Concerned calls came in to Mark Smith, who works for Louisiana's Department of Homeland Security, part of the governor's office.

"Everyone wanted to know what those Blackwater mercenaries were doing down here," Smith said.

Blackwater bristles at that reaction.

"This is not the occupation of Louisiana," said Andy Veal, one of the company's Katrina zone supervisors. "This is Americans helping fellow Americans."

It is also a potential plug for a hole in Blackwater's business model. Private military companies thrive on war – an icy fact that could gut the now-booming industry when or if Iraq settles down.

Katrina offered Blackwater a chance to diversify into natural disasters. After the hurricane, the company formed a new division of domestic operations. Seamus Flatley, a retired Navy fighter pilot, is the division's deputy director.

"Look, none of us loves the idea that devastation became a business opportunity," Flatley said. "It's a distasteful fact, but it is what it is. Doctors, lawyers, funeral directors, even newspapers – they all make a living off of bad things happening. So do we, because somebody's got to handle it."

America's Gulf Coast is a long way from the troubled lands where Blackwater usually plies its trade. But after Category 3 Katrina, the area resembled a war zone. Hundreds were dead. Communities were destroyed. Law and order collapsed with the levees. Residents were trapped by floodwaters. Rescuers were being shot at.

“The scope of this thing – how big it was – was just too much for any organization,” said Coast Guard Cmdr. Todd Campbell, who directed a large part of the rescue operations, including the dramatic rooftop airlifts that had the nation glued to the TV.

“Every aircraft we had was committed,” Campbell said. “And it wasn’t enough. I couldn’t find anyone who could give us more.”

Campbell didn’t know it, but a Blackwater crew was already beating its way toward Louisiana in a just-purchased Super Puma helicopter.

Bill Mathews, Blackwater’s executive vice president, explained why the company headed in before anyone called for help:

“We ran to the fire because it was burning.”

Campbell says Blackwater asked just one thing: that the Coast Guard cover the cost of the Puma’s fuel. But what really impressed him was the crew’s attitude.

“Just the way they walked in,” Campbell said, “with confidence in their faces. They weren’t rattled one bit by what was going on. They just listened to what we wanted and went out and did it.”

Precisely what that was depends on who’s doing the recalling.

According to Gary Jackson, Blackwater’s president: “We were lifting people off of housetops, off of small boats, to med-evacs – people that were sick and hurt.”

According to Campbell: “They offered to do rescues, but there were legal concerns. What if someone got hurt? So we asked them not to engage in pulling people out. They debriefed me at the end of every day, and no one ever mentioned doing any rescues. If they were out there doing them, it was solely on their own.”

Campbell has no doubts about the rest of Blackwater’s help. For two weeks after the storm, the Puma conducted survey flights and ferried 12 tons of water, food and supplies to rescuers and stranded inhabitants.

“What they did was critical,” Campbell said. “I’ve never been in a position like that before, where I had to reach out to civilians for help. I couldn’t have asked for a better, more professional response.”

In the midst of all that humanitarian work, the phones started ringing at company headquarters in Moyock, NC.

“The word got out,” Jackson said. “‘Blackwater’s in New Orleans.’ People started calling us from the hotels: ‘Can you do this? Can you do that?’ We set up a 24-hour-a-day operational center, and we started taking these commercial contracts.”

The first customer was a communications company that hired Blackwater to fetch 100 of its employees who were stuck in flooded homes. Because a state of emergency had been declared, Blackwater could bypass Louisiana licensing requirements. Boats, waders and other gear were loaded on a company cargo plane. A convoy of SUVs rolled out of Moyock.

Within 18 hours, Jackson said, Blackwater had 135 men on the ground. They were outfitted for battle, complete with helmets, flak vests, pistols, batons and M-4 carbines, capable of firing 900 rounds per minute.

“Yes, we looked a little heavy-handed coming in,” Jackson said, “but it was because of the Intel that we received.”

Exaggerated or not, Jackson said, reports coming out of New Orleans indicated the place was in anarchy, with armed looters roaming the city and outlaws preying on the populace.

“We did a risk assessment and decided we’re going to send guys in there for real,” he said.

Jackson said Blackwater re-established order in the city’s most famous area: “We got guys into the French Quarter ... and we basically secured it.”

His claim rubs some the wrong way.

“There may be some braggadocio involved there,” said Lt. Lawrence McCleary of the Louisiana State Police. “If they were securing a hotel or something down there, that’s one thing, but locals secured the French Quarter.”

Maj. Ed Bush of the Louisiana National Guard said: “Every group wants to kind of thump their chest a little bit, but just think about it. We live here. Seems kind of naïve to think Blackwater beat us to the French Quarter.

“But you know what? I’m not interested in getting into a pissing match over it – not with someone who came down here and really helped. It’s safe to say they were among the first to arrive.”

Whatever the sequence of events, in those first days after the storm, Blackwater’s client list exploded.

Blackwater says it has not fired a single shot since arriving in Louisiana. The company’s contractors heard plenty of gunfire, though. None, they say, was aimed at them.

“We’d be on one street going to a house for extraction and on the next street over we’d hear ‘bang-bang-bang,’” Veal said. “Then the Blackhawks would swarm in. It was kind

of surreal, that all that was happening in this country. Americans were floating by dead in the street and there was no time to do anything about it. We had to focus on the living. It was like something you'd see in the Third World."

Veal says Blackwater rescued plenty of nonpaying folks along with the paying ones. "Once you came across someone, you just couldn't leave them there," he said. Clients were signing up quickly. Blackwater won't name them or reveal what it charged. It will only say that the jobs called for a laundry list of duties.

Blackwater contractors stood guard over fuel shipments, generators, transmitters, railroad cars, stores, hotels, banks, museums, landmarks, industrial sites, power plants and a temporary morgue set up in Baton Rouge. They escorted CEOs, insurance adjusters, technicians and repair crews. They watched over high-dollar homes and conducted "asset retrieval". They plucked priceless paintings off walls and fetched precious gems from abandoned bedrooms.

"It was hot and miserable," Veal said. "We were all sleeping in tents. The bugs just ate you alive."

One week after the storm, Blackwater landed a contract with the Federal Protective Service, the agency that provides security at federal buildings and watches over FEMA when its workers deploy. The rate, according to a copy of the contract obtained from the Department of Homeland Insecurity: \$950 per day for every man the company supplied.

Dennis O'Connor, a spokesman for the Federal Protective Service, said the magnitude of the disaster left the agency with little choice: "We don't have enough people to handle something like this ourselves, and the local security companies were devastated. Whoever we awarded the contract to had to be totally self-sustaining. Everything down there was wiped out."

Blackwater had the mind-set for dealing with such hardships. The company set up its own camps, equipped with shower trailers, dining tents, post offices, barber shops, laundry facilities, armories and mechanic shops. Contractors from across the country poured into Moyock, where they were outfitted with tactical gear and sent south.

The Federal Protective Service contract gave Blackwater more impact in the hurricane zone. While contractors were not deputized – a fact that left them with no official law enforcement powers – their formidable presence was now spread across the city.

"They helped us keep the bubble afloat," said the National Guard's Bush. "At first, they occupied their battle space and we occupied ours, but as the weeks trickled on and the Guard guys from other states started going home, Blackwater stepped in to fill the void." The transition worried some locals, Bush said.

“I think it was the fact that they were civilians more than anything else,” he said. “So we walked the ground together for a while, until everyone got more comfortable. We turned over some pretty big areas to them.”

Less than a month after Katrina battered the Gulf Coast, Hurricane Rita delivered a second blow, coming ashore just to the west.

Federal Protective Service expanded its contract and Blackwater rushed toward Rita. “At one time,” Jackson said, “we were spread across 500 miles, from Texas to Mississippi.”

The commercial work has dried up. So has the need for military-style action. The combat look has softened to tan polo shirts and sidearms. Tents have been replaced with hotel rooms. Dinner is served on china. FEMA is the main reason Blackwater is still here.

Roughly 100 contractors are all that remain. They’re split between New Orleans, Baton Rouge and a few scattered outposts. They work 12-hour shifts, often seven days a week, standing guard at FEMA sites. They’re paid around \$300 a day, which means they can earn up to \$9,000 a month.

Most are former law enforcement officers. They hired on after the storm, when special-ops types were no longer required and Blackwater made the shift to a long-term presence.

“Law enforcement is better suited for this kind of job,” Blackwater’s Flatley says. “They’re used to dealing with the public – with Americans. They’re trained to defuse things, not escalate them.”

There are harder-core guys, who rotate between stints in Iraq and New Orleans. “You wouldn’t really call this a vacation,” Flatley says, “but they are able to recharge here between tours overseas.”

When it comes to hiring, the stakes are high. Everybody carries a gun, and one hothead making the wrong call could ruin the company’s image and derail a lucrative future in the disaster business. Of the 1,600 contractors Blackwater has cycled through the Gulf Coast, Flatley says, around three dozen have been sent home for various infractions – none criminal.

“It can be as small as unprofessional behavior, partying too much or even just a bad attitude,” he says. “We can’t afford to put up with any of it. At that point, my only question is, ‘Do you prefer an aisle or a window seat?’”

State and local police say they know of no arrests of Blackwater contractors in their area, but that does not stop the talk. Rumors had Blackwater commandeering apartments, shooting bad guys and conspiring with the government to hide corpses.

The company says there is no truth to such stories. Tommy Potter, a former police officer from Franklin, is the company's area manager for New Orleans. He shakes his head at the rumors.

"Look," he says, "people swore that there were alligators walking down the streets. How does that stuff get started? Who knows?"

The Blackwater men admit that, in the early days, they bumped heads a bit with local police, who resented all the out-of-town guns. They'll volunteer that someone slashed all four tires on a company SUV. At the library, Yates confesses he was in one real knock-down, drag-out – with a large woman who leaped on him and wouldn't quit.

Kathleen Young runs the Chateau Le-Moyne, a French Quarter hotel. She thinks Blackwater's mere presence stops trouble in its tracks. Young's hotel chain hired the company the day after Katrina.

"I didn't know that," she says, "and I was scared to death coming back into the Quarter after the storm. Looters were everywhere. Windows were smashed out. There were no police.

"And then I got here, and there were two Blackwater guys camped out in my lobby. Nothing was touched. They stayed with me for weeks, and I never saw anyone challenge them."

Young was so impressed; she struck a deal with Blackwater to house more of its men. At one point, contractors occupied nearly half of her 171-room hotel. The number has dwindled, but her lobby, at any given time, is still full of men carrying guns.

Young has also put Blackwater on retainer.

"If something like this ever happens again," she says, "I want them in here before the storm."

Blackwater isn't content to wait around for Mother Nature to strike again. It's busy scouring the far corners of the world for more business.

"Hmm. Well, I never heard of them. I guess I wasn't paying as good attention to the news as I thought I was. I got an email from a friend about Blackwater after that Jericho episode, but didn't bother to look it up."

"They're all trained up to what amounts to the level of Special Forces. They're mercenaries, flat out."

"I'll be damned."

Silent Running – Chapter 13

*Outside my window
You're walkin' by with someone new (outside my window)
Outside my window
The way I used to walk with you (outside my window)*

*Smilin' while you're walkin', laughin' while you're talkin'
Happy as can be (happy, happy, happy)
With your arm around him, you're so glad you found him
You never once look up to see me*

*Inside my window
I'm just as sad as I can be (inside my window)
Inside my window
I'm wishin' you'd come back to me (inside my window)*

*Some day if you're lonely and you want me only
Here's what to do (what should I do?)
Call me, my darlin' (darlin')
Outside my window (window)
And I'll come runnin' (runnin') to you
(Outside my window)
(Outside my window)
ooh-ooh, ooh-ooh, ooh-ooh*

ooh-ooh

Did you figure out who the group was? They're names are Gary Troxel, Gretchen Christopher and Barbara Ellis. The name of the group was *The Fleetwood's*. They're about my age.

o

Blackwater sometimes dressed like the military and you couldn't tell them from regular soldiers. Had Hillary had FEMA hire Blackwater to clean up this mess? The guys I shot weren't Blackwater, I'd have never got the drop on them, regardless of how careful I'd been. Like I told Derek, I'd never heard the name.

At a lecture the other day they were playing an old news video of Lt. Col. Oliver North testifying at the Iran-Contra hearings during the Reagan Administration.

There was Ollie in front of God and Country getting the third degree, but what he said was stunning!

He was being drilled by a senator; “Did you not recently spend close to \$60,000 for a home security system?”

Ollie replied, “Yes, I did, Sir.”

The senator continued, trying to get a laugh out of the audience “Isn’t that just a little excessive?”

“No, sir,” continued Ollie.

“No? And why not?” the senator asked.

“Because the lives of my family and I were threatened, sir.”

“Threatened? By whom?” the senator questioned.

“By a terrorist, sir” Ollie answered.

“Terrorist? What terrorist could possibly scare you that much?”

“His name is Osama bin Laden, sir” Ollie replied.

At this point the senator tried to repeat the name, but couldn’t pronounce it, which most people back then probably couldn’t. A couple of people laughed at the attempt. Then the senator continued. “Why are you so afraid of this man?” the senator asked.

“Because, sir, he is the most evil person alive that I know of,” Ollie answered.

“And what do you recommend we do about him?” asked the senator.

“Well, sir, if it was up to me, I would recommend that an assassin team be formed to eliminate him and his men from the face of the earth.”

The senator disagreed with this approach, and that was all that was shown of the clip.

By the way, that senator was Al Gore!

Also:

Terrorist pilot Mohammad Atta blew up a bus in Israel in 1986. The Israelis captured, tried and imprisoned him. As part of the Oslo agreement with the Palestinians in 1993, Israel had to agree to release so-called “political prisoners.”

However, the Israelis would not release any with blood on their hands. The American President at the time, Bill Clinton, and his Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, “insisted” that all prisoners be released.

Thus Mohammad Atta was freed and eventually thanked the US by flying an airplane into Tower One of the World Trade Center. This was reported by many of the American TV networks at the time that the terrorists were first identified. It was censored in the US from all later reports. If you agree that the American public should be made aware of this fact, pass this on.

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The real question burning in my mind was, 'Did Hillary hire Blackwater to clean up this mess?' The President of the US has discretionary funds, LBJ and Nixon used them for their 'alternate' White Houses, one in Johnson City and the other in San Clemente. There was a stink in the media about those funds in either the 70s or 80s. Maybe Congress eliminated them, if they had, I missed that too. I figured they probably hadn't and Broom Hillary had tons of money. After all, she was Commander in Chief of the military unit that guarded Ft. Knox, she could probably pay in gold. The Commander in Chief commanded West Point, too.

Gold coins are minted at West Point. Today sole production of the entire American Eagle series proof and uncirculated bullion coins in gold, silver and platinum is located at West Point, along with all gold commemorative and a few silver commemorative coins. All commemoratives from West Point are struck with the "W" mint mark. Beginning in 2006, the West Point Mint also made all American Buffalo gold bullion coins. The West Point Mint still acts as a gold bullion depository, and silver is kept on site only in quantities to meet minting demands. They minted 22 carat and 24 carat gold coins (the gold Buffalo nickel was 1 ounce of pure gold).

They did come back and searched more than once, apparently they didn't have the building plans or none had been filed. Every time they showed up, I expected to be led away in handcuffs. Man, I had to really act dumb and my condition seemed to worsen because of the lack of meds. Actually, I was hoeing the garden building my strength. The boys continued their shopping trips and while they didn't bring back much, it was more than enough for us and sometimes they had stuff to take into Paris and trade for things they couldn't find.

There was in fact, a conflict of laws.

The Disaster Recovery Personal Protection Act of 2006 is a United States Federal law that prohibits funding from the Department of Homeland Insecurity to be put towards the confiscation of legally possessed firearms during a disaster.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Eddie Compass ordered police and National Guard units to confiscate firearms from citizens who remained in the area.

The NRA and GOA filed a lawsuit against the city of New Orleans to place an emergency injunction forbidding such seizures from continuing. The injunction was granted.

“Remember New Orleans” became a rallying cry for a drive by the gun rights movement to enact legislation in their home states forbidding what happened in New Orleans from happening in their home states.

S Amdt 4615 to HR 5441: To prohibit the confiscation of a firearm during an emergency or major disaster if the possession of such firearm is not prohibited under Federal or State Law.

Congressman Bobby Jindal sponsored the house version of the bill. Senator David Vitter sponsored the Senate version of the legislation which was known as the Vitter Amendment.

The Vitter Amendment passed the US Senate 84 ayes to 16 nays.

The amendment was signed into law by President George W. Bush as part of the 2007 DHI appropriations bill on September 30, 2006.

The new law the Congress passed ignored the Vitter Amendment. Hillary ignored the Vitter Amendment when she ordered the gun grab. I felt I was within my right to ignore the order to seize my guns and hence, I told everyone I sold them at gun shows. As a Patron/Life member of the NRA, I fully supported their interpretation of the Second Amendment. Apparently, I wasn't the only person who resisted the effort of the government to grab guns. There were a bunch of those bushy tailed squirrels around and I rather doubt they'd give up their guns. Not all of them lived in Kalifornia and even if they did, they probably ignored unjust laws.

Madam Hillary just slit her own throat and didn't even feel the pain. There are about 260 million guns in the US. People who own guns won't give them up without a fight if they worked long and hard to get the money to buy the guns in the first place. They'll give up the ammo, one bullet at a time. That damned UN was trying hard to take away our gun rights.

The international gun prohibition lobbies and their United Nations allies insist that there is no personal right of self-defense – that people should be forced to rely exclusively on the government for protection. The prohibitionists also insist that there is no human right for people to possess the means of self-defense, such as firearms.

But what are people supposed to do when the government itself starts killing citizens? The genocide in Darfur, Sudan, is the direct result of the types of gun laws that the United Nations is trying to impose throughout the entire world. Millions of people have already died because of such laws, and millions more will die unless the UN is stopped.

Like Iran today and Afghanistan under the Taliban, Sudan is ruled by a totalitarian Islamic government. The current regime, which calls itself the National Islamic Front, took

power in a military coup in 1989 and immediately began imposing Islamic law throughout the country and perpetrating genocide.

The first victims were the inhabitants of the Nuba Mountains of central Sudan. According to Gregory Stanton of Genocide Watch, “The Nuba were grouped into ‘Peace Villages’, where their women were systematically raped by Arab men, their children stolen to serve as slaves and at least 100,000 people ‘disappeared’, never to be seen again.”

The next targets were the Africans of south Sudan, who are mainly Christians or Animists. The most recent genocide victims are the people of Darfur, a Texas-sized region in western Sudan.

The Darfuris are Muslims, but like the majority of Sudan’s population, they are black Africans, in contrast to the Arabs who control the government.

The foundation of Sudan’s genocide is, as with almost every other genocide in world history, the disarmament of intended victims.

In Sudan, it is virtually impossible for an average citizen to lawfully possess the means for self-defense. According to the national gun control statutes, a gun licensee must be over 30 years of age, must have a specified social and economic status and must be examined physically by a doctor. Women have even more difficulty meeting these requirements because of social and occupational limitations.

There are additional restrictions on the amount of ammunition one may possess, making it nearly impossible for a law-abiding gun owner to achieve proficiency with firearms. A handgun owner, for example, can only purchase 15 rounds of ammunition a year. The penalties for violation of Sudan’s firearms laws are severe and can include capital punishment.

The practical application of the gun laws is different. If you are someone the government wants to slaughter – such as one of the black Africans of central, southern and western Sudan – then you are absolutely forbidden to possess a firearm. A US Department of State document notes: “After President Bashir seized power in 1989, the new government disarmed non-Arab ethnic groups but allowed politically loyal Arab allies to keep their weapons.”

On the other hand, if you’re an Arab who wants to kill blacks, then Sudan’s gun control laws are awfully loose. In Darfur, there has been a long rivalry between camel-riding Arab nomads and black African pastoralists. The Arabs consider blacks to be racially inferior and fit only for slavery. In Darfur Rising, the International Crisis Group explains:

“Beginning in the mid-1980s, successive governments in Khartoum inflamed matters by supporting and arming Arab tribes, in part to prevent the southern rebels from gaining a foothold in the region ... Arabs formed militias, burned African villages and killed thou-

sands. Africans in turn formed self-defense groups, members of which eventually became the first Darfur insurgents to appear in 2003.”

The report states that what provoked the black Africans to rise up against the Khartoum tyranny was “the government’s failure to enforce the terms of a tribal peace agreement requiring nomads of Arab background to pay blood money for killing dozens of Zaghawas [one of the African tribes in Darfur], including prominent tribal chiefs.”

Likewise, Peter Verney, of the London-based Sudan Update, writes that the government armed the Arabs “while removing the weapons of the farmers, the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa.”

He points out that the disarmament of the black Africans has been enforced ruthlessly:

“Since 2001, Darfur has been governed under central government decree, with special courts to try people suspected of illegal possession or smuggling of weapons ... The security forces have misused these powers for arbitrary and indefinite detention.”

While the blacks there are forbidden to possess arms, the Arabs are given arms by the government – five or six guns per person, according to Amnesty International. The Arabs are then formed into terrorist gangs known as Janjaweed (literally, “evil men on horseback” or “devil on a horse”).

You can be confident that when handing out rifles to Arab terrorists, the Sudan government does not follow its law that anyone who wants a gun must undergo a medical examination.

As a result of tyrannical oppression, there are armed rebel groups in the Sudanese genocide regions. That these resistance groups had been able to acquire weapons illegally was a great affront to the United Nations and the gun prohibition lobbies, who denounce any form of gun possession by “non-state actors.” A “non-state actor” is any person or group whose arms possession is not approved by the government. Good examples include the Sudanese who were fighting the genocide in their own country, the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto and the American revolutionaries.

The Sudanese resistance movements, although able to acquire some arms for their own operations, did not have the resources to protect the many isolated villages in the vast nation.

So, with black villagers disarmed (thanks to Sudan’s strict gun laws) and Arab gangs well-armed (thanks to the government), the stage was set for genocide.

In south Sudan, the genocide program has killed 2.2 million victims and driven 4.5 million from their homes. Those not killed have often been sold into slavery. Rape has been extensively used as an instrument of state terror.

In Darfur, according to Smith College professor Eric Reeves, the leading US scholar on Sudan genocide, the Janjaweed have caused the deaths of up to 450,000 black Sudanese. The Janjaweed have also raped untold thousands and have forced over 2 million black Sudanese into refugee camps.

Notably, the majority of villages bombed were villages where there were no armed rebels. Thus, the destruction of the villages should be seen not as an overzealous form of counter-insurgency warfare, but rather as a deliberate attempt to destroy an entire society. The ethnic cleansing of Darfur has been so thorough that, literally, there are no villages left to burn.

The displaced villagers live in squalid refugee camps in Sudan or in neighboring Chad, where mortality rates from disease and malnutrition are very high. The UN is, incredibly, pushing for these camps to be turned into “safe areas” under the control of the Sudanese military.

The special representative of the UN secretary-general who signed the “safe areas” plan was Jon Pronk, who in 1995 was in charge of the “safe areas” scheme in Bosnia. There, Serbs murdered thousands of Bosnians while Dutch “peacekeepers” stood idle. The Sudanese victims are generally unarmed. Amnesty International reported the testimony of a villager who complained: “None of us had arms and we were not able to resist the attack.” One under-armed villager lamented: “I tried to take my spear to protect my family, but they threatened me with a gun, so I stopped. The six Arabs then raped my daughter in front of me, my wife and my other children.”

In cases when the villagers were able to resist, the cost to the marauders rose. Human Rights Watch reported that “some of Kudun’s residents mobilized to protect themselves, and fifteen of the attackers were reportedly killed.”

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review asked a US State Department official why there were no reports of the Darfur victims fighting back. “Some do defend themselves,” he explained. But he added that the perpetrators have helicopters and automatic rifles, whereas the victims have only machetes.

Darfur is one of those places where the government has implemented the Rebecca Peters principle that crime victims should not use arms to protect themselves. The Sudan Organization Against Torture (a human rights group based in London) reported on March 20 about an incident that took place on March 7:

Two men “in military uniforms attacked four girls from Seraif idp [refugee] camp, Hay AlGeer, West Nyala, Southern Darfur. The girls were attacked whilst collecting firewood outside the camp at 11:30. During the attack, one of the men assaulted one of the girls and attempted to rape her. The armed man touched the girl’s breasts and attempted to forcefully remove her underwear. When she resisted, the man began to beat her. In defense she grabbed a knife that she had been using to cut the firewood and stabbed the attacker in the stomach.

“Following the stabbing, the girls managed to escape and returned to Seraif camp where they reported the incident to police officers inside the camp. The police refused to file the case.”

One of the rapists later died from a knife wound. “Following the news of the death, the officers immediately arrested the four girls inside the camp on suspicion of murder.” They face execution by hanging. The girls are: Amouna Mohamed Ahmed (age 17), Fayza Ismail Abaker (16), Houda Ismail Abdel Rahman (17), and Zahra Adam Abdella (17).

Under intense pressure from President Bush, the Khartoum government signed a cease-fire treaty for south Sudan in late 2004. The government has promised that in 2010, the south Sudanese will be able to vote on a referendum for independence. In May of this year, the Khartoum government and the Darfur rebels signed a treaty, the Abuja Accord, which was supposed to stop the Darfur genocide.

But Reeves argues that there is no evidence that the Islamic tyrants intend to stop their destruction of the people of Darfur. To believe that Sudan will obey the treaties it has signed is to ignore the fact that in 2003, Sudan ratified the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide—and then went right on committing genocide in Darfur. Reeves predicts that hundreds of thousands more Darfuris will die, while the United Nations continues to fail to act in any way that actually protects the victims or hinders the genocidaires.

One reason for UN inaction is that the Chinese, Russians and French – each of whom have Security Council veto power – are determined to protect their own lucrative commercial and oil development relations with Sudan’s tyrants.

Because the international community has utterly failed to protect the Darfuris, they have every moral right to protect themselves. The United Nations, however, is hard at work to make sure that genocide victims in Sudan, and anywhere else in Africa, will not be able to resist.

Sudan is covered by an UN-backed treaty called “The Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa.” The protocol was signed in 2004 by representatives of Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania.

The protocol requires universal gun registration, complete prohibition of all civilian-owned semi-automatic rifles, and “heavy minimum sentences for ... the carrying of unlicensed small arms,” as well as programs to encourage citizens to surrender their guns, widespread searches for firearms, educational programs to discourage gun ownership and other policies to disarm the public.

In other words, the UN is successfully pushing for gun control even in East African nations with current genocides: Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia. Several other countries subject to the Nairobi Protocol, such as Rwanda and Uganda, have recent histories of genocide against disarmed victims. Quite plainly, the UN believes that even resisting an actual genocide in progress is not a sufficient reason for someone to want to own a gun.

A similar disarmament project is being pushed by the United Nations in the South African Development Community (SADC). Two of the SADC nations—Zimbabwe and Congo—are also the sites of current genocide.

Even more extreme UN gun prohibitions – a total ban on firearms imports for civilian use – are being imposed in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Among the ECOWAS states are the Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire) and Guinea. According to Genocide Watch, Ivory Coast has entered the final pre-genocide phase of “preparation”.

In Guinea, the National Alliance for Democracy and Development warns that, “There is a looming Rwanda-type genocide ...”

The gun prohibition lobbies have so thoroughly penetrated the United Nations that at the UN anti-gun conference, held last month in New York City, gun prohibition lobby staff actually served as delegates from various governments.

The prohibition lobbies and their UN allies will tell you that people never need guns for protection – not for protection from rapists, and not for protection from genocidaires. Governments and the United Nations will protect everyone – they promise.

The tragedy of disarmed victims in Sudan, and all over Africa, shows the deadly falseness of the prohibitionist promise. For decades, genocidal tyrants have slaughtered millions of Africans while the rest of the world has stood idle. Now, the United Nations has become objectively complicit in genocide, by trying to ensure that never again will anyone targeted for genocide be able to use a firearm to save himself or his family.

(44 nations have signed the UN Protocol, they're mostly terrorist nations.) Ron Paul says:

The point about discussing the genocides? The more things change, the more they stay the same... remember the Holocaust?

The gun control movement in America has lost momentum in recent years, as evidenced by the Democratic Party's conspicuous silence on the issue in the 2000 and 2002 elections. In the midst of declining public support for new gun laws, more and more states have adopted concealed-carry programs. The September 11th terrorist attacks only made matters worse for gun control advocates, as millions of Americans were starkly reminded that we cannot rely on government to protect us from criminals.

Perhaps the biggest threat to gun rights in America today comes not from domestic lawmakers, but from abroad. Even as support for gun control wanes at home, globalist bureaucrats are working to override national sovereignty and craft international gun laws.

For more than a decade the United Nations has waged a campaign to undermine Second Amendment rights in America. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has called on members of the Security Council to address the “easy availability” of small arms and light weapons, by which he means all privately owned firearms. In response, the Security Council released a report calling for a comprehensive program of worldwide gun control, a report that admonishes the US and praises the restrictive gun laws of Red China and France! Meanwhile, this past June the UN held a conference with the silly title “Week of Action against Small Arms”.

It’s no surprise that UN bureaucrats, who are predominantly European and third-world socialists, want to impose gun control worldwide. After all, these are the people who placed a huge anti-gun statue on American soil at UN headquarters in New York. They believe in global government, and armed people could stand in the way of their goals. They certainly don’t care about our Constitution or the Second Amendment. But the conflict between the UN position on private ownership of firearms and our Second Amendment cannot be reconciled. How can we as a nation justify our membership in an organization that is actively hostile to one of our most fundamental constitutional rights? What if the UN decided that free speech was too inflammatory and should be restricted? Would we discard the First Amendment to comply with the UN agenda?

Contrary to UN propaganda, gun control makes people demonstrably less safe, as any honest examination of criminal statistics reveals. In his book *More Guns, Less Crime*, scholar John Lott demolishes the myth that gun control reduces crime. On the contrary, Lott shows that cities with strict gun control – like Washington DC – experience higher rates of murder and violent crime. Gun control simply endangers law-abiding people by disarming them.

More importantly, however, gun control often serves as a gateway to tyranny. Tyrants from Hitler to Mao to Stalin have sought to disarm their own citizens, for the simple reason that unarmed people are easier to control. Our Founders, having just expelled the British army, knew that the right to bear arms serves as the guardian of every other right. This is the principle so often ignored by both sides in the gun control debate. Only armed citizens can resist tyrannical government.

Congressman Ron Paul of Texas (14th District) enjoys a national reputation as the premier advocate for liberty in politics today. Dr. Paul is the leading spokesman in Washington for limited constitutional government, low taxes, free markets, and a return to sound monetary policies based on commodity-backed currency. He is known among both his colleagues in Congress and his constituents for his consistent voting record in the House of Representatives: Dr. Paul never votes for legislation unless the proposed

measure is expressly authorized by the Constitution. In the words of former Treasury Secretary William Simon, Dr. Paul is the “one exception to the Gang of 535” on Capitol Hill. And yes, he got reelected.

Silent Running – Chapter 14

*Our guardian star lost all its glow
The day that I lost you
It lost all its glitter the day you said “no”
And its grey skies turned to blue*

*Like him I am doubtful
That your love is true
So if you decide to call on me
Ask for Mr. Blue*

*I'm Mr. Blue
When you say you love me
Then prove it by goin' out on the sly
Provin' your love is untrue
Call me Mr. Blue*

*I'm Mr. Blue
When you say you're sorry
Then turn around headed for the lights of town
Hurtin' me through and through
Call me Mr. Blue*

*I sleep alone each night
Wait by the phone each night
But you don't call
And I won't hurt my pride
Call me mister*

*I won't tell you
When you paint the town
A bright red to turn it upside down
I'm painting it too
But I'm painting it blue*

*I sleep alone each night
Wait by the phone each night
But you don't call
And I won't hurt my pride
Call me mister....*

*I won't tell you
When you paint the town
A bright red to turn it upside down
I'm painting it too*

*But I'm painting it blue
Call me Mr. Blue*

Call me Mister Blue

o

I suppose the reason Hillary won in 2008 was that people were still angry over the war on terror. Bill started it when he refused take out Osama bin Laden. But, we all know who got blamed for it, George W. Bush. Oliver North had been right, but Al Gore was concerned with eventually becoming President. And, when he didn't, he cried foul. US Sen. George Allen, R-Va., decided against seeking a recount in his close race with Democrat Jim Webb. If it had gone the other way, would Webb have insisted on a recount?

James Henry "Jim" Webb, Jr. is a veteran Marine, author and politician. Now a Democrat, Webb served in the Republican administration of Ronald Reagan. Webb graduated from the US Naval Academy and was a member of the Marine Corps until 1972. Webb was an infantry officer and is highly decorated for his service in the Vietnam War. Webb earned a Navy Cross, the second highest decoration in the Navy and Marine Corps for heroism in Vietnam. Webb also earned the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, and two Purple Hearts. During his four years with the Reagan administration, Webb served as the first Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and as Secretary of the Navy.

Webb wrote the story and was the executive producer for the 2000 movie 'Rules of Engagement', which starred Tommy Lee Jones and Samuel L. Jackson. In October 2006, while commenting on the need to break away from stereotypical movie villains, Webb stated, "[e]very movie needs a villain. Towel-heads and rednecks – of which I am one..., became the easy villains in so many movies out there."

I hadn't given much, if any, thought to killing those soldiers, I was very angry at the time. Later, I realized that some of them might have had families and it started to eat at me. My stomach started to hurt and I began to wake up at night with my guts on fire. At first I tried taking a couple of Pepcid AC at bedtime, but that didn't work, I just got up later, still with my gut on fire. Next I tried taking an extra Prevacid with my evening meds, but all that did was extend the time it took for me to wake up. Finally, I took a Prevacid with my evening meds and 2 Pepcid AC at bedtime. That worked, but I was waking up more tired than I had been when I went to bed.

"Dad, you're suffering from guilt. It seems to me you did what you had to do. The Prevacid is getting hard to find and you've gone through a one year supply in six months. What's eating you, killing the soldiers?"

"Derek, I was angry and acted without thinking. Hell, I don't know where I got the strength to carry the rifle as far as I did. I also think that I'm getting more depressed over

this. It's not like I was defending myself or my family, I tracked them down and murdered them."

"If you think that way, you're not going to get over it or see the necessity of what you did. Do you think they would have hesitated to seize any firearms they found? Would they have arrested you and thrown you in a camp? You, of all people, shouldn't feel guilty. Would you hesitate to kill a snake that was about to strike? I know you and your answer is, 'Hell no'. Those soldiers weren't soldiers anyway, according to the Lamar County Sheriff's office they were mercs who worked for Blackwater. They would have taken your guns and arrested you, but more than likely, they'd have kept that Tac-50 of yours."

"I'll think about it."

"Think about this, some of the people in Paris are organizing a local militia. They're tired of the heavy handedness. Damon and I are joining them and you'd be perfect to run our communications."

"What heavy handedness?"

"Anyone caught with a gun has had them seized and they've been moved to a camp."

"What camp?"

"It's a tent city they erected near Cox Airport."

"Who are they putting in the camps?"

"Whole families. Everyone in the home where the guns were found. The arrests have fallen off as people wised up and began to hide their guns. The main problem is EO 14302. They only managed to get 6 of the Supreme Court Justices out of Washington and if the case makes it that far, they could be evenly divided. The President can nominate replacements, but first they have to get Congress back together so the Senate can Advise and Consent. Article II, Section 2, clause 2, provides that the President of the United States 'shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States...'"

Years ago they made a movie titled *Advise and Consent*, based on a book by the same name. The book's theme is based loosely on the Alger Hiss and David Lilienthal controversies. It starred, among others, Henry Fonda, Charles Laughton, Don Murray, Walter Pidgeon, Peter Lawford, Gene Tierney, Franchot Tone, Lew Ayres and Burgess Meredith. One discourse:

"What I did was for the good of the country."

“Fortunately our country always manages to survive patriots like you.”

Can you hear me, can you hear me running?

o

I was a while getting over what I did. The goon squad showing up every few days to search the house and buildings probably helped. I couldn't understand why they simply didn't arrest me. Why harass my family and me? Maybe if they pushed hard enough I'd lose my cool and give it away? As the saying goes, I may have been born yesterday, but I've been downtown playing with the big kids all day. I was getting so good at the senile act I began to believe it myself.

I used my cane as a prop when I went to hoe the garden. I didn't need it, but it sure supported the image of how feeble I was. All the time, I was building a few grams of muscle, or that Loaded M1A had been on a diet. When the goons showed up, I'd further the illusion by hoeing a part of the garden I'd already hoed, ignoring parts full of weeds. I suddenly became deaf in both ears and only understood people when they faced me. I had the dumb look and, 'Huh?' down pat. About the time we started canning, they finally gave up, but not before saying they'd be back for *their share* of our food.

In truth, I did have mobility problems, my legs were bad and getting worse from the neuropathy. But, we finally ran out of cigarettes and that helped immensely. There was a two week period without any conversation while I detoxed. Contrary to rumors, the food didn't taste any better and I wasn't any happier, but I did wheeze less. Meanwhile, as soon as the jars came out of the canner and sealed, they were lugged to the shelter. When we ran out of jars, we used Ziploc freezer bags and froze the rest.

The garden did well; we had 4 large bags of onions and about 40 gunny sacks of potatoes. While there was still a Farmers Market in Paris, you were taxed 50% of your produce by the military. We heard about it long before we had stuff to take to town and opted not to go. The boys would take a little in the truck and go door to door trading for things we needed. In late September, I got out Derek's chain saw and told him we needed firewood. I pointed to the empty spaces around the house and told him they needed filling up.

“Dad, Lincoln freed the slaves.”

“Derek, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, the 13th Amendment to the Constitution freed the slaves. Which state was the last to ratify the 13th Amendment and in what year?”

“How would I know something like that?”

“I suppose you wouldn't, you thought Lincoln freed the slaves. Mississippi, 1995. That doesn't change the fact that we need firewood. We're getting low enough on propane

that I'm not going to run the furnace this year. If you can find more propane fine, we'll use it; meanwhile we'd better replace the firewood we've burned. I don't suppose you boys have seen an old wood burning kitchen stoves anywhere have you?"

"We haven't looked."

"Maybe you'd better start looking. We can hang the clothes to dry, use the fireplaces to heat and if we have a wood stove we can get by without propane."

"What about the hot water heater?"

We have 2 choices, an electric water heater or heating water in/on the stove. The dryer in the shelter is electric so we can swap it out, if necessary. You might try to find one of those demand units that runs on electricity like I used in the shelter. I really don't want to strip the shelter entirely; we could always need it again."

"Oh, right, for WW IV."

"Because of a tornado, a super volcano, or just because we need to hide out for a while."

"Do you know how paranoid that sounds? Yeah, I know, just because you're paranoid... Anyway how much wood?"

"You can measure the length and divided by 8 to get the number of cords. Or, you can just fill in the holes."

o

Sometimes you just have to know when to lie down and give up. Did you see the movie titled *Twilight's Last Gleaming* with Burt Lancaster? Burt had 2 chances to make it work, slim and none. Worse, he had Richard Widmark on the other side as a SAC General determined to get him out of the silo at any cost. Didn't Charles Durning remind you of Jimmy Carter? You can try to blackmail the government, but you won't get away with it no matter how noble the cause. Would the government ever tell the truth? Put your .45 to your head and pull the trigger, that's more likely to succeed.

At the moment, I knew just about how Burt felt sitting in that silo. If we pushed this to the point it became a revolution, the government would call it an insurrection and we'd be playing with the big boys. Insurrection is the act or an instance of open revolt against civil authority or a constituted government. The American Revolution was an insurrection against King George III. The Americans created a political ideology called "republicanism", which was widespread in the colonies by 1775. It was influenced greatly by the Radical Whigs or "country party" in Britain, whose critique of British government emphasized that corruption was to be feared. The colonists associated the "court" with luxury and inherited aristocracy, which Americans increasingly condemned. Corruption was

the greatest possible evil, and civic virtue required men to put civic goals ahead of their personal desires. A second stream of thought growing in significance was the liberalism of John Locke, including his theory of the "social contract". It implied the natural right of the people to overthrow their leaders, should those leaders betray the agreements implicit in the sovereign-follower relationship.

My family wouldn't be the ones to start an insurrection, but if one came up, who's to say about our participation? The good Lord knows we had what it would take to pitch right in and help. I hate to bring it up again, but the idea that patriot was a dirty word was irritating. From what I read on the forums right before and after the 2006 elections, there were many people who said they'd fight for their gun rights. I can remember a conversation I had with Ron about then. We agreed that we were either going to have a terrorist event or an insurrection. The politicians had been whittling, cutting our rights to the quick. Hmm, I wonder how he's doing? He liked the mags I got him for his SU-16 and I think I had him talked into buying a couple of cases of M855. He had another new rifle too, a Winchester model 70 in .338 Winchester. Both that and his .375 H&H were scoped, although Ron didn't hunt.

He told me he had at least a dozen boxes of ammo for each rifle but was pretty short on pistol ammo. He wouldn't be taking this laying down. Although Ron was raised in California, he was born in Brownsville, Texas; that's a long way from Paris. We had several long discussions before I left Palmdale discussing what we were going to do when TSHTF. He bemoaned the fact that he didn't have a basement or shelter and if Palmdale got nuked. He said they'd have about enough time to bend over and kiss their butts goodbye. Near as I could tell, Russia hadn't nuked Palmdale, they just blew the stuffing out of EAFB.

He had our number and address, although with long distance out he'd have to get Paris before he could reach me. Meanwhile I had to run communications for the new local militia. We decided to use 2 meters and the CB radios. I used the Kenwood for 2 meters and a scanner to monitor the multiple frequencies. This was a lot easier to do when I was in high school.

As I understood the plan, the local militia would raise hell in the three county AO. The leaders of the militia designated Lamar, Red River and Bowie Counties as their AO. They were convinced that authorities would be looking for them in Red River County. I figured the authorities would be looking for them in all 3 Counties. The Red River Army Depot and Lone Star Ammunition Plant were located east of New Boston in Bowie County. In BRAC 2005, the DOD wanted to close RRAD, but the Commission didn't agree. Lone Star next door loads, assembles, and packs primers, fuzes, grenades, boosters, bursters, detonators, and tracers, as well as ammunition items ranging from mortars to 155-mm projectiles. The contractor is Day & Zimmerman, Inc. Other tenants of the facility include Arkansas Hardwood and American Dehydrated Foods. In BRAC 2005, the DOD recommended closure of Lone Star it and RRAD stayed open.

Lone Star had a test facility where they tested munitions and disposed of production that failed quality control. Our people went looking, hoping to find usable explosives the cleanup people had missed. I heard they had manufactured M67s there; it would have been nice to find a few cases of those sitting around. What the hell, we could always pretend to be Clint Eastwood and use dynamite.

There were two ways to approach this and they discussed both. The first, a full frontal assault, was set aside in favor of the second approach, a guerilla type operation consisting primarily of harassment. Some of these good old boys had done a little time in SE Asia and they offered to share what some guy named Charlie taught them. I explained that in one of my earlier stories.

Fourth Generation war is guerilla warfare more than “terrorism.” Terrorism is an enemy special operation, a single tactical action designed to have direct operational or strategic effect. Because targets that have such direct operational or strategic effect are few and are usually well-protected, terrorism normally plays a minor role in Fourth Generation conflicts – though when it does occur the effects can be wide-ranging.

Most of what Marines will face in Fourth Generation situations is guerilla warfare. Here, lessons from past guerilla wars, especially Vietnam, remain relevant on the tactical level. Perhaps the most important lesson is that to defeat guerillas, we have to become better at their own game than they are. When Colonel David Hackworth commanded a battalion in the Vietnam War, he called this “out-guerilla’ing the guerilla,” or “out-g’ing the G.” In his memoirs, *About Face*, he wrote,

“We would no longer be the counterinsurgents who, like actors on a well-lit stage, gave all their secrets away to an unseen, silent and ever-watchful (insurgent) audience in a darkened theater. Instead we would approach the battlefield and the war as our enemy approached it, and in so doing begin to out-guerilla the guerilla – “out-G the G,” as I hammered it again and again into the men of the Hardcore (battalion) – and win.”

What was it George Patton said in the movie, “Rommel, you magnificent SOB, I read your book.” Thanks to a Marine, we knew we had to “out-G the G.” I had all the Army Field Manuals on my computer, most anyway. That gave us their tactics and we could throw in a little Gunny Highway and improvise, adapt, overcome.

“Derek, if your bunch comes in contact with them, try and capture some SINCGARS. We need one to listen in on them and several more to reprogram so we have secure communications too. You can reprogram can’t you?”

“I can but Damon can too. He can also repair them if we can get the parts.”

“In that case, find me a pair of antennas and he can mount them on the same pole.”

We checked and the largest pole we could find was a 100’ Douglas Fir pole treated with creosote. I consulted a source and learned we needed to put 11’ of the pole in the

ground. Damon managed to get a lineman from the REA to install the 2 SINCGARS antennas and the antenna for the HF, Tri-band, CB and business band radios. The distance to the horizon is the square root of 13 times the height in meters. The antennas were roughly 27 meters off the ground suggesting the line of sight was 19km. That didn't allow for the height of the receiving antenna so the range was much more than 11+ miles.

In general terms, HF is up to 30mhz, VHF is 30mhz to 300mhz and UHF is > 300mhz. That means that CB radios, ~27mhz, are HF radios. Before the war, the FCC had all but given up on regulating CB. We got the REA guy back and had him install a Starduster on a 39' mast attached to the top of the utility pole. With linear amps and the full whip antennas we could communicate all the way to Texarkana with ease. We operated the radios out of band, on the high side, where almost nobody else was talking. Ain't technology wonderful? At least I know what lyric to include in the next chapter...

"Uh, mister, that mast won't hold up in a strong wind."

"Why not, it's a Radio Shack mast? They haven't sold them for years but it really doesn't have much weight on it. Did you attach it to the pole real good?"

"Well yeah, it won't come off the pole. But..."

"How much do I owe ya?"

"Oh, nothin, it's for the militia, right?"

"What militia?" I asked with a wink.

"All you guys are going to do is succeed in getting the feds to come down on us hard. Y'all know that, doncha?"

"Aw hell, they're regular visitors out here. I used to have some firearms before I sold 'em at the gun shows and don't have no paperwork to prove it."

"Seems like lotsa folks sold their firearms at gun shows."

"Some had them stolen and so forth."

"Why do you need a CB antenna that's 125' off the ground?"

"I like to listen to channel 19."

"Almost nobody uses CB these days except the truckers. Ain't no trucks running."

"Just in case, I guess. Anyway, thank you kindly, I got to get back to my chores."

o

Man, I needed Ronald McDonald here. He had about a dozen old AM CB radios in his garage in Palmdale. Well, he had our address, he probably either go to Robert's or come here.

*Uh, Breaker One-Nine, this here's the Ronald McDonald
You got a copy on me Gar-Bear? C'mon*

"Hey asshole, where are you?"

"I'm lookin at a poor copy of the Eiffel Tower."

"How the hell are you?"

"I'm all plugged up and feel like crap, but Robert and Johnny both died and Lyn said we ought to go to Paris. I think she meant France, but you can't get there from here."

"Hang on, I'll drive to town and see you in 10 minutes."

"Drive? You get caught driving without a license; they'll impound your car."

"It's a Jeep and I have a Texas driver's license."

"You heal up?"

"Not really, no. I'll be right there."

"Hey uglier than me."

"Nobody is uglier than you asshole. Hi, Linda."

"Is Sharon ok?"

"She at home working on a quilt. Ron, did you bring your box of CBs?"

"I sold them before we moved to Cedar Hill."

"Crap, we really needed 'em."

"Whatcha got goin?"

"We're gonna out-G the G."

"Say what?"

“You said you knew about Blackwater?”

“I did 5 years ago. What do they have to do with anything?”

“I’ll tell ya when we get to the house. What’s in the trailer?”

“Everything we own.”

“Did you stop by the Sheriff’s office and show them your travel documents?”

“Ain’t this a bitch! Didn’t have to, they got us on the way into town.”

“Follow me.”

Fifteen minutes later we were sitting at the kitchen table drinking coffee. It was the same table we had in Palmdale but the chairs were new.

“How did you get permission to travel all the way from Cedar Hill to Paris?”

“We didn’t. I’ve got some stuff on my laptop you ought to get a kick out of. For instance, blank, pre-signed Travel Documents that you just fill in and print.”

“Maybe I can give you something back you can use.”

“For instance?”

“Meds. The boys have been cleaning out drug stores. We have a little salvage operation going.”

Silent Running – Chapter 15

*Uh, Breaker One-Nine, this here's the Rubber Duck
You got a copy on me Pig-Pen? C'mon*

*Uh, yeah 10-4 Pig Pen, fer sure, fer sure
By golly it's clean clear to Flag-Town, C'mon*

*Uh, yeah, that's a big 10-4 Pig-Pen,
Yeah, we definitely got us the front door good buddy,
Mercy sakes alive, looks like we got us a convoy*

*Was the dark of the moon, on the sixth of June
In a Kenworth, pullin' logs
Cabover Pete with a reefer on
And a Jimmy haulin' hogs
We 'as headin' fer bear on I-One-Oh
'Bout a mile outta Shaky-Town
I sez Pig-Pen, this here's the Rubber Duck
An' I'm about to put the hammer on down*

*Cause we gotta little ol' convoy, rockin' through the night
Yeah we gotta little ol' convoy, ain't she a beautiful sight?
Come on an' join our convoy, ain't nothin' gonna git in our way
We're gonna roll this truckin' convoy, cross the USA
Convoy... Convoy...*

*Uh, breaker Pig-Pen, this here's The Duck
Uh, you wanna back off them hogs
10-4, 'bout five mile or so, 10-roger
Them hogs is gittin' in-tense up here*

*By the time we got into Tulsa-Town
We had eighty-five trucks in all
But they's a road block up on the clover leaf
An' them bears 'as wall to wall
Yeah them smokies 'as thick as bugs on a bumper
They even had a bear-in-the-air
I sez callin' all trucks, this here's The Duck
We about to go a huntin' bear*

*Cause we gotta great big convoy, rockin' through the night
Yeah we gotta great big convoy, ain't she a beautiful sight?
Come on an' join our convoy, ain't nothin' gonna git in our way
We're gonna roll this truckin' convoy, cross the USA
Convoy... Convoy...*

*Uh, you wanna give me a 10-9 on that Pig-Pen?
Uh, negatory Pig-Pen, yer still too close
Yeah, them hogs is startin' close up my sinuses
Mercy sakes, you better back off another ten*

*Well we rolled up interstate fourty-four
Like a rocket sled on rails
We tore up all a our swindle sheets
An' left 'em settin' on the scales
By the time we hit that Chi-Town
Them bears was a gittin' smart
They'd brought up some reinforcements
From the Illinois National Guard
There 'as armored cars, and tanks, and Jeeps
An' rigs of every size
Yeah them chicken coops 'as full a bears
An' choppers filled the skies
Well we shot the line, an' we went for broke
With a thousand screamin' trucks
And eleven long-haired friends of Jesus
In a chartreuse microbus*

*Hey Sod Buster, listen
You wanna put that microbus in behind the suicide jockey?
Yeah, he's haulin dynamite
He needs all the help he can git*

*Well we laid a strip fer the Jersey Shore
An' prepared to cross the line
I could see the bridge 'as lined with bears
But I didn't have a doggone dime
I sez Pig-Pen, this here's the Rubber Duck
We just ain't a gonna pay no toll
So we crashed the gate doin' ninety-eight
I sez, let them truckers roll, 10-4*

*Cause we gotta mighty convoy, rockin' through the night
Yeah we gotta mighty convoy, ain't she a beautiful sight?
Come on an' join our convoy, ain't nothin' gonna git in our way
We're gonna roll this truckin' convoy, cross the USA
Convoy... Convoy...*

*Uh, 10-4 Pig-Pen, what's yer 20?
Omaha?!
Well they oughta know what to do with them hogs out there fer sure*

*Well mercy sakes alive good buddy
We gonna back on outta here
So keep the bugs off yer glass
An' the bears off yer... tail
We gonna catch ya on the flip-flop
This here's the Rubber Duck on the side
We gone
Bye, Bye...*

o

“Do you know what I take?”

“The only thing I know is that Linda takes Prevacid. However, we'll go down to the shelter and Derek can go through the boxes and pull out what you take.”

“What shelter?”

“It's below the house, Ron. I did all the stuff I did in my stories and even hid the entrance. I got in trouble with the law and they seem to come by a couple times a week to search for my guns. I've been doing my feeble, senile bit ever since. Sometimes I think I believe it myself.”

“What did you do?”

“I got very angry when they showed up demanding all of our papers and searched the house looking for my guns. Four soldiers got killed that day by somebody using a .50 caliber rifle and I once had a Tac-50 registered to me.”

“Once?”

“Well, the story is that I sold all my guns at gun shows to get money for food.”

“Strange, all of mine were stolen.”

“File a police report?”

“Sure did.”

“Where did you hide them?”

“In Robert's gun safes. Where did you hide yours?”

“In the shelter. Let's go down there and get you some meds.”

“So, you turn and pull up on this pipe and the woodpile swings away like this. There you go, the ramp entrance to the shelter.”

“Are you going to close it back up?”

“Yeah, you never know when the goon squad is going to show up.”

“What’s that noise?”

“My kids all sleep down here. I’ve got them all, Lorrie, Damon, Derek and Amy plus our grandchildren.”

“Where’s Missy?”

“Buried behind the house. She had a good life, but finally went blind and her diabetes was pretty bad. She died.”

“This is a long ramp.”

“It goes three quarters the way around the house. That’s the reason you saw firewood piled around the house, to keep the feds from using ground penetrating radar.”

“Does it work?”

“I don’t know, they’ve never used it here. Tell Derek what you take and he’ll tell which box to look in.”

“Big.”

“Same size as the house. Derek, Ron needs some pills.”

Ron had a list, not his usual thing to do, and gave the list to Derek. I showed Ron my ham shack and the utility room. Finally, I showed him our gun collection.

“I got Sharon one of the SR-556s with the piston. She also has a Mini-14, some cowboy guns and when she carries, she uses a Hi-Power.”

“Are those M4s?”

“I recovered those from the 4 soldiers I shot.”

“Where are the machineguns?”

“Don’t have any except for the 4 M4s. The militia unit in town is fighting a 4th generation war, out-guerrilla-ing the guerrillas. They travel pretty light.”

“So, they were right, you shot the soldiers.”

“Yeah, they were right. I just got very angry Ron and my adrenalin got flowing. I humped that damn Tac-50 a quarter mile, found some cover and took ‘em out in 4 shots. They weren’t so far away that I had to worry about anything except hitting them. Derek got me some Raufoss and another Sergeant got me more. Altogether, I have over 2,300 rounds of Mk 211 MP ammo. It’s HEIAP and can take out about everything except a tank.”

“You murdered them?”

“I sure as hell didn’t ask them to surrender first. Not my finest moment, oh well.”

“And, if I get this right, they suspect you but don’t have enough proof to arrest you.”

“That sums it up nicely.”

“How much is the reward?”

“Not enough to cover the cost of your funeral.”

“When I die, I want to be buried face down, Gar-Bear. I want a tombstone shaper like an arrow placed right above my Ass. They can engrave it, ‘kiss it’. So, when are you going to let me shoot your big rifle?”

“As soon as I get one. Sold mine at a gun show to get money for food, remember? You can shoot yours any ol’ time you want. Be careful though, if they recovered any portion of the bullets, the barrel in your rifle will match the recovered bullets and you wind up hanging from an old oak tree.”

“I’ll be careful. Which ammo do I use?”

“Use the ball and adjust the zero. When you done, use one mag of the Raufoss and re-zero the rifle.”

“I didn’t plan on shooting more than one magazine.”

“Use the Raufoss, it right on the money and the scope is tuned to it.”

“I thought you told me Barrett said not to use a suppressor on the rifle.”

“I did and he did. Funny thing though, several companies built suppressors for the M82. We have an operation coming up soon, feel like helping me out?”

“What’s your role?”

"I sit right here and coordinate communications. I could use someone to watch my back. You could take one of those M4s if you want. Say, how did you get your rifles halfway across the county?"

"That was the first thing we loaded. We left the guns safes in Cedar Hill. Then again, I never had as much ammo as you."

"We'll get the boys to unload your trailer. Linda and you can stay with us in the house for now. What do you want for a home?"

"I sorta like the look of yours."

"It taken. If you can fix the boys up with travel permits, maybe they could find a new Beacon Hill or the Entertainer Series sitting on a lot somewhere. We can share this basement."

"Ron, here are the pills. I gave you all we had of what you and your wife use, except for the Prevacid, I substituted Nexium, it's the same difference and Dad won't take purple pills."

"Derek, set aside one of the M4s for Ron to use. He said he wanted to test fire the Tac-50, so let him use one mag of Raufoss."

o

"I'd feel better Gar-Bear with my guns in the shelter. That rifle doesn't kick as bad as my .338 or .375. I gave Damon, Derek and Aaron travel papers good for the entire state of Texas. I'm originally from Texas, you know."

"Bull, you were 10 days old when your family moved to Kalifornia. What happened to your kids?"

"Brenda got married and they were living in Bakersfield. Last I knew Kevin and Scott were in prison. Jennifer is still in Ft. Smith and Paula and her husband were in Ohio. How did you manage to get yours all in one place?"

"Back on my 66th birthday, I insisted they all come here for birthday cake. I sat them down and explained the new facts of life. They'd just passed the Gun Registration Act of 2009. Long story short, I encouraged them all to move here."

"It was about then that Robert died. I think that Johnny mourned herself to death, we buried them both in 2009. We were ok for a while; I took your advice and stocked up some. Robert had done the same thing, so we had enough food for a couple of years. He had that range in his basement and I used it to keep my handguns skills good."

“You know, we dug those biometric chips out, but later decided to have them put back in. I don’t get out much; ever since I had that little run-in with the law, I’ve been laying low. I have everyone convinced I’m a feeble old deaf cripple who can’t get around without the wheelchair. I work in the garden, hoeing. If the law shows up, I start hoeing the same place I’ve already hoed. They probably think I have Alzheimer’s.”

“What’s the deal on this operation you talked about?”

“The DOD wanted to close the Red River Army Depot in BRAC 2005. The Commission decided not to because of the vehicle maintenance they were doing. They did close the Lone Star Ammo Plant next door however and moved the manufacturing to various new locations, some of it to Iowa. We found out that they’re storing some munitions and explosives in the bunkers at RRAD to supply the Blackwater people. However, Blackwater isn’t in charge of security there, that’s another contractor. We’re going to raid the place and properly equip ourselves so we can go up against the government.”

“What’s my job?”

“You’re going to cover my six. We installed a remote antenna switch that cuts the feeds to the antennas with the push of a button. Being down here, I won’t know what’s going on topside. If the feds show up, you push the button. That will light a red light in the basement and I’ll quit transmitting before I blow up the transmitters. The relay has a built in delay circuit of ten seconds, to allow me time to shut down. The control is that Stanley Garage Door Opener on the shelf by the antenna switches.”

“That’s it?”

“No, then you sit yourself down at the radio shack in the house and fiddle with the CB radio. It only has 4 watts and can barely reach to town. You play dumb and tell them you were talking to Damon and Derek who are out trading. If they say anything, you start complaining about the asshole who was walking all over your signal. If they ask where I am, tell them the boys let me ride along to get some fresh air.”

Some of the folks in Paris had worked at either the RRAD or Lone Star at one time and they knew the lay of the land. They were more than a little certain they could bypass any security. I know that I don’t have to remind you, but they were going to be out-G the G.

The US military has a problem and is reluctant to admit it. They are so dependent on technology, a good old fashioned insurgency is something they have trouble handling. One would have thought that the Viet Cong would have taught us something. They did, but that was 40 or more years ago. It seems like in the 21st Century, we’d forgotten the lesson. An insurgent is: a person who revolts against civil authority or an established government; especially: a rebel not recognized as a belligerent. An insurgency is: Rising in revolt against established authority, especially a government.

It's very hard to fight an insurgency as we proved 200+ years ago. We had it proven to us in Vietnam and again in Iraq. That must be why the government implemented the draconian measures they did like the implanted ID chips, the travel documents and the Internal Passports. A person could forge papers, Ronald McDonald proved that. The hard part was getting the paper, but he had a couple of reams. In order for a person to beat something like an implanted chip, they needed multiple registered identities. That took more planning than we had time for. I considered that in a previous story (they're actually planning exercises).

Has anyone been paying attention to our government in the 21st Century? Osama struck the WTC and the Pentagon. That was a sad day for more reasons than ~3,000 people dying, it gave impetus to the USA PATRIOT Act, and there went some of our liberties. The government's idea of protecting us was to take away some of our rights. USA PATRIOT Act II didn't pass, but many parts of it were in fact later enacted. They did it in pieces and somewhere you probably find what they did all outlined on a piece of paper.

You know, friends, I did my part. Long before the government came up with biometric Passports, long before the government came up with uniform state driver's licenses, I wrote about it. My point is, don't blame me, I long ago said that knowledge is power (Scientia est Presencia). Your problem was you thought I was just some nut case in Palmdale. If you had biometric Passports and uniform state driver's licenses, you had a back door National Identity Card. I remember pundits saying they'd never have them. Right, like you had a choice.

With the people like we have leading our government and in positions of power, it seems inevitable that one of two things will happen. If they win, it will be 1984. Otherwise, the people will have enough and revolt. I'm not suggesting it, it would be sedition: Conduct or language inciting rebellion against the authority of a state. All I'm doing is reporting what I see in my crystal ball. Some suggest that the population lacks the gumption to revolt. They could be right.

*Take the children and yourself
And hide out in the cellar
By now the fighting will be close at hand
Don't believe the church and state
And everything they tell you
Believe in me, I'm with the high command*

o

Utopian fiction is the creation of an ideal world as the setting for a novel. Dystopian fiction is the opposite: creation of a nightmare world, where utopian ideals have been subverted. Both are commonly found in science fiction writing. Along with Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, *1984* is among the most famous and cited works of dystopian fiction in literature. *1984* tells the story of Winston Smith and his attempt to rebel against the

totalitarian state in which he lives. *Brave New World*, published in 1932, was first intended as a dystopian novel by Aldous Huxley. Set in London in the 26th century, the novel anticipates developments in reproductive technology, biological engineering, and hypnopædia that combine to change society. There were other books of the genre, *Fahrenheit 451* and *Animal Farm*.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the consent of the governed, – That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new guards for their future security. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

That’s just food for thought, it was written in 1776. I like that part that says, ‘That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government’. Understand, there wasn’t anything wrong with our Constitutional Republic; it was the politicians that administered it. Can we change that at the ballot box? No we can’t, there are too many people dependent on the government; we don’t stand a chance. Besides, since WW III, we haven’t had any elections. There were enough armed ‘unarmed’ citizens that gangs weren’t a problem.

I’m the type of guy who sometimes lets my principles get in the way of life. An example might be the TV show, *The West Wing*. I enjoyed the show but Martin Sheen had to open his anti-American mouth and I had to quit watching it. Susan Sarandon did the same thing and I refused to watch anything she was in. I didn’t buy the complete set of M*A*S*H episodes because Mike Farrell was in it.

No one showed up while the militia was running the operation at RRAD. When I got the all clear, I went up to the house to join Ron.

“Is it over?”

“They got in and out without being discovered, a former Force Recon guy was in charge.”

“What did you do?”

“Listened, mostly. They did pretty well; Blackwater had a fair amount of stuff stored there.”

“For instance?”

“M72 LAW rockets, M67 hand grenades plus 7.62 and 5.56 ammo. It’s that new stuff, M993 and M995. It’s the new armor piercing ammo that the Army tested against BRDM-2 vehicles.”

“What no SS-109?”

“Yes, they got standard NATO M855 too. If you’ll excuse me, I have to paste together another chapter for a story I’m writing.”

“Is that how you write all of your stories, cut and paste?”

“I cut and paste things I find interesting yes, but then I have to string all that junk together to make it into a story. When I find some good stuff, I save it in my resources section and use it later, when I can. Sometimes I include lyrics to song I like, if they fit in.”

Silent Running – Chapter 16

*I came to town to search for gold
And I brought with me a memory
And I seem to hear the nightly cry
Go hanging your dream on the hanging tree
Your dreams of love that could never be
Hang your faith of dream on the hanging tree*

*I search for gold and I found my gold
And I found the girl who love just me
And I wish that I could love her too
But I left my heart on the hanging tree
I left my heart with the memory
And the faith of dream on the hanging tree*

*Now there'll meant who grave my gold
And man to take my gold for me
When a man is gone, he needs no gold
So they carried me to the hanging tree
To join my dream and memory
Yes they carried me to the hanging tree*

*To really live you must almost die
And it happen just that way with me
They took for gold and set me free
And I walk away from the hanging tree
I walk away from the hanging tree
And my own true love
She'll walk with me
That's when I knew that the hanging tree
Was a tree of life new life for me
A tree of hope new hope for me
A tree of love new love for me
The hanging tree, the hanging tree
The hanging tree*

God, how I miss Marty Robbins!

◦

Time to Feed the Hogs Yet?
by Henry Bowman - 05.08.01

Let me try to answer the title question with as much brevity as I can muster: Yes!

“Henry!”, you gasp, “what are you saying? You can get your butt in a king-sized sling talking like that!”

Really? I don’t think so. I think it sorta depends on how you define “Hogs”. If you define “hogs” as any version of one or more persons who come at you without justification and with the intention of placing your life or liberty in jeopardy, then I think you’re on pretty safe ground. Unless, of course, you can find a statute in your local jurisdiction that forbids the defending of your own life, or the lives of those around you. Midnight raids conducted at the wrong address due to bureaucratic bungling, or involving warrants based on knowingly false evidence, or in direct contravention of the US Constitution qualify as examples of without justification.

But what if those coming at you are from the Government? To which I think the proper answer is quite simply that if they are acting as described, then by definition they are not from the government. “Governments are instituted among men, deriving their JUST powers from the consent of the governed.” If someone you know and who alleges to be your friend, and who you’ve known for many years as a friend, adopts a course of action which causes you great harm, and if this person does this without any provocation or justification, then he has by his own hand redefined himself to something other than “friend”. He may in fact have redefined himself to the 180-degree position of “enemy”. We must always remember that “by their fruits shall ye know them”. Or, to put it another and more contemporary way, it doesn’t matter how “official” the usurper may claim to be, “if it walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it’s probably a duck.”

I am indebted to the JPFO web page for the following citation, which will no doubt be familiar to some of you. It is from the rabbinical commentaries in the Talmud and relates to the right (or even the duty, one could argue) to defend oneself from harm. It is brief and to the point: “If someone comes to kill you, arise quickly and kill him.” Any who think this sentiment ambiguous must surely be the product of government education.

Shortly after I adopted my current nom de plume I wrote a short speech which I intended to recite at my front door if and when the occasion called for it. Perhaps it is time to put it out in front again, for the edification of the newer readers and the memory jogging of some of the older ones.

“Before you take one step into my home, young officer (or deputy) _____, I have a statement to make which you need to hear.

“I am fifty-nine years old; I have no wife, no children, and little or no prospects for the future. My daily routine might best be described by the vernacular expression, ‘keepin’ on just to keep on keepin’ on’. I work. I pay taxes. I vote. I delude myself that these things make a difference somehow. My life has been, like most, a seemingly pointless progression of ups and downs, with maybe a few more downs than most. Maybe not. I have owned guns all my life, since the age of seven, and have received considerable training, both formal and informal, in their use. I have been a peace officer on three occasions and a state-licensed private investigator as well. In all my years of gun owner-

ship, I have pointed a gun at another human being on only one occasion, the result of which was the saving of a life without the gun being fired. All of my guns collectively have not killed as many people as Ted Kennedy's car.

"In any event, my situation and yours are almost certainly different in many ways. I suspect you have a family, perhaps a mortgage, and dreams for the future. This puts you in a position to make a life-altering decision. You can turn around, go back to the station house, and tell your watch commander that I presented you with satisfactory evidence of my having sold my firearms to an FFL dealer in another jurisdiction. Your other choice is for you and I to die today, right here and right now in this doorway, because I will not live a life of servile subjugation to the state. If I am to be stripped of even one of my 'inalienable' rights, then I have no rights at all, including the right to life.

"Oh, one more thing: I hope that your police training has made you observant enough to notice that at no time since my opening my door to you have you been able to see both of my hands. That being said, it's your call."

Obviously, the above was meant to apply to a situation created by mandatory firearms confiscation, and not to a shadowy figure in full ninja garb coming down your hallway in the middle of the night. Still, the mindset in both situations should be the same.

Our law in this land of the less-than-free is based on the Common Law of England. Both we and the English have strayed far from the path, and could both benefit by a return to much of it. While addressing the British House of Commons on the subject of the right to privacy and need to protect life, liberty and property, William Pitt warned:

The poorest man may, in his cottage, bid defiance to all the forces of the Crown. It may be frail, its roof may shake; the wind may blow through it; the storm may enter; the rain may enter; but the King of England may not enter; all his force dares not cross the threshold of that ruined tenement.

It is past time for the people of this country to relearn this fundamental truth, and long past the time for the government to be reminded of it . . . by any means necessary.

Henry Bowman

The Henry Bowman Brigade
by Henry Bowman - Posted: 08.09.00

In response to an increasing number of requests for information about the Brigade, I offer the following. Only a little reading between the lines will be necessary.

The Henry Bowman Brigade takes its name from the lead character in the novel *Unintended Consequences* by John Ross. If you have not as yet read this magnum opus, do so at the earliest opportunity. Don't borrow the book from a friend; buy your own copy. Not only will you want to own it after you've finished reading it for the first time, but au-

thors of Mr. Ross' caliber (pun intended) need to be supported in every way possible. I should add that the concept for the Brigade is mine alone. John Ross is not in any way connected with it, although his involvement would certainly be welcome at any time.

The Mission Statement is my own creation also. I personally believe that there is nothing in it that Henry might not have written himself. In fact, it is because I feel such a personal affinity for this character that I have taken his name for my 'nom de plume'.

As I have indicated in previous writings for various web pages, there are no requirements for membership other than sharing a common set of values as indicated in the Mission Statement (see below). Wallet ID cards, shoulder patches, window decals, etc. are specifically to be avoided. If anyone approaches you with any of these items for sale, you should go to condition yellow.

As I conceive the Brigade, its greatest strength lies in its anonymity, in the same way that a few people carrying concealed makes everybody safer, because the "bad guys" don't know exactly WHO is carrying. If you find that you're in tune with the values of the Brigade, simply start signing your submitted materials to any and all publishers (web pages such as this one, letters to the Editor of your local paper, etc.) with the honorific "Member, the Henry Bowman Brigade". (See earlier submissions to this web page by John Galt and Henrietta Bowman.) Let the anti-gun wackos go nuts trying to track down our little bit of smoke on the wind!

The ultimate purpose of the Brigade is to serve as a "fifth column", only this time on the side of the land being occupied, ...our land. As I've recently stated in a short note to another Brigade member, the forces of evil will never be able to know for certain who stands against them when the SHTF. But they WILL know that anyone who appears to be a hard-working, tax-paying, country-loving, flag-saluting citizen MIGHT be a member of the Brigade. This should give them cause to reflect; as Dr. Samuel Johnson once remarked, "the prospect of one's imminent demise focuses the mind wonderfully."

To repeat, the strength of this group lies in its lack of structure. There is no chain of command, no management tree. When your house is on fire, you don't need someone from a higher place in an artificial pecking order to tell you to get the hell out of the building!

Henry Bowman

Mission Statement of the Henry Bowman Brigade

The Henry Bowman Brigade consists of a small group of people nationwide that has collectively reached its outrage tolerance limit with regard to the state of affairs in our country, the corruption of our government, and the degradation of our citizenry.

We have come together to say "no more; this far and no further" to those who would destroy our great nation and the values which gave it birth. We have come together to

pledge ourselves and all that we have to reversing the many destructive trends evident today in our schools, public institutions, governmental divisions and the fabric of social intercourse in our society.

We have come together to say that we will pay any price, including the highest price, to make our country again into what it used to be, because we would rather die on our feet than live on our knees, perish rather than live as slaves.

Finally, we have come together to warn those who would hold cheap our values, our estates and our lives. They will be judged by their own standard, and measured with their own yardstick. We will repay eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, and life for life.

God Bless the United States of America
Long Live the Republic

Unintended Consequences, by John Ross

Over the next few weeks, I'll be stocking this new site with recommendations I'd wanted to make en masse somewhere... and this is the place. I've already mentioned Boston's Gun Bible in my opening salvo, so I'd be remiss not to follow up immediately with John Ross' *Unintended Consequences*.

I've never used this comparison with any other work, but I'm not the first to call it "the Atlas Shrugged of the gun freedom movement". As a matter of fact, Vin Suprynowicz is quoted saying so himself on the book's dustcover: "A modern novel of liberty to rival Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*... a masterwork." So, there you go... I stand in good company making such a bold comparison.

I should add that our own Dr. Edgar Suter proclaims on the same dustcover: "The most important work of fiction I have read in over a decade." There, I've shamelessly dropped friends' names to bolster my own already heady feelings about this work.

At 862 pages of small type on large pages, the novel rivals Rand's word count. Some people are put off by that, but I'm one of those people who loves this kind of Big American Novel. I'm also one who really likes the fact that it's what I've heard described as "a technical manual masquerading as a novel". It's not masquerading as such, it's blatantly such. Like *Atlas Shrugged*, it's an epic novel of ideas, sweeping a century's history seen through the lens of the gun rights movement. The technical manual characterization is a true one, and a big selling point: it's an in-depth crash course in gun culture, combat mindset, and the care & feeding of personal arms.

The centerpiece narrative of this work is the plight, flight, and fight of protagonist Henry Bowman, a self-made millionaire geologist cum petroleum prospector consultant who finds himself on the victim end of the BATF stick. Much of the book's early plotline, however, is taken up in historical narrative, a great deal of which is a compelling drama-

tization of the events of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, as well as another narrative surrounding the events leading up to the pivotal 1939 *US v. Miller* decision.

This is not a book for the faint of heart. It's not a limped-wristed attempt to justify private gun ownership from the "sporting arms" angle favored by the national NRA. It's a full-blooded celebration of the fundamental human, civil, and constitutionally protected individual right, the right to self-defense.

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The Sierra Times began its news and information service in January 19, 2000. Our duty is to provide news, commentary and analysis of current event from a realistic viewpoint. Opinions, editorials and message boards are given wider latitude, and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Sierra Times as a whole.

Many people who see the word "Sierra" may jump to the conclusion that this news organization is somehow affiliated with the "Sierra Club", a well-known "environmentalist" political lobbying outfit. This couldn't be farther from the truth. The Sierra Times is not affiliated with the Sierra Club whatsoever, nor do we share their concerns.

The Sierra Times was given its name because, at the time of its conception, it was to be based in Tonopah, Nevada, near the Sierra Nevada mountain range. It began in Pahrump, Nevada, 60 miles (100km) due west of Las Vegas, nestled near the southern tip of the Sierra Nevada's. We are now located in the Finger Lakes region of New York.

As for our political leanings, when you figure that out, let us know. The Sierra Times is not affiliated with any political party. We consider ourselves independent, yet we have been labeled left-wing, right-wing, and everything in between. We try, whenever possible, to be fair in our news reporting, giving both sides of an issue the opportunity to be heard. This goes especially for our editorial commentaries.

Zealots, on the other hand, get little tolerance here. We find 'extremism' on either side to harm the overall debate. The lone exception is regarding the Constitution of the United States, where we must in fact admit that we are extremists in defending it.

We consider ourselves and our readers "Real Americans". However, we have and will never provide a definition of a "Real American". We leave that decision up to the readers. Our audience also consists of Real Canadians, Real Europeans, Real Australians, some Real Asians, and Real human beings from all over the world.

The Sierra Times attempts to fill the voids left by state-sponsored and other controlled media.

Our primary focus began with western land right issues, which is where it shall remain. We at the Sierra Times believe that agriculture and the harvesting of our natural resources are paramount to our nation's economic, social and political health. We also

believe that those who privately own those resources are the in a position to manage them in the best interests of the environment as a whole. But most important, we believe humans are part of the environment, and until scientific evidence proves otherwise, all other animals remain subservient to humans unless they are granted the power to vote and gain the ability to pay taxes.

The Sierra Times is also a place where many of the injustices against Americans are reported, while covered in few other places. This includes our own articles, wire stories, special features, and commentary. In the case of western (or any other) issues, we encourage citizens to report abuses of power or policy in any form. It will get a fair airing here.

Other than that, The Sierra Times has 10 more amended principles and guidelines we try to follow, and which could best be described as our 'mission statement'. It is a pretty good testimony to our governing principles. They are provided below.

Amendment I Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Amendment VII In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

We hope this helps explain who and what we are.

Sincerely,
J.J. Johnson Founder - The Sierra Times
An Internet Publication for Real Americans
(defunct 2003)

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There something awfully familiar about the Mission Statement of the Sierra Times. I'm sure it will come to me.

From: World Defense Review
Published 15 Jul 05

Ethics in the war against terrorism

By Richard "Rogue Warrior" Marcinko

Special to World Defense Review

This is either the most opportune – or the worst – time for me to express my personal views on "ethics" within the framework of the "War on Terrorism." As most of you know, the SEAL community has just suffered its worst loss of teammates, warriors, lovers and family members since World War II. Although nothing unethical occurred during the operation in Afghanistan that cost a total of 19 special operations warriors (11 SEALs and 8 US Army personnel) that I'm aware of today; it never-the-less is a dramatic loss.

This is the time of the year that the east coast SEALs hold their annual reunion (week-end of 15 July) at Little Creek, Virginia and the west coast SEALs at Coronado, California in August. The memorial services have been conducted and there will continue to be

heavy hearts during this usual period of bonding and reflecting on the joys of accomplishment and team spirit. All members of the community are certainly recognizing the reality of the War on Terrorism.

A reference book that I use regularly in my preparation for speeches and the writing of now 14 Rogue Warrior books is *Warriors' Words: A Dictionary of Military Quotations* by Peter G. Tsouras. The book covers warriors' words from Sersostriis III to Schwarzkopf - 1871 BC to AD 1991. For some reason the term "ethics" does not appear as a category. Does that infer that ethics does not have a role in war? In a general war of historical value I would say, it does.

In the past, wars were fought to bring damage upon the enemy; today terrorism inflicts mayhem on innocent civilians; including women and children. Even the conduct of terrorism has changed its tactical application from hijacking planes for a political message to suicide bombings that are designed to change our life pattern and cripple our economies.

My Webster's dictionary defines "ethics" as: "1. The study of standards of conduct and moral judgment; moral philosophy. 2. A treatise on this study. 3. The system or code of morals of a particular person, religion, group, professionals, etc."

By this definition, I would have to logically think that radical Muslim terrorists fall in here categorically as a "person," a "religion," and a "group;" and as intelligence has provided, some are also occupational "professionals."

Frankly, I do not find their tactics very "ethical" within our accepted terms and definitions.

That is KEY: I said our terms, definitions, logic, standards, values etc. How rude and crude of me to think that my (our) views are the ones that universally are accepted.

When I use the word "war" instead of "ethics" I can go back to my book of quotes and share some words of wisdom from Naval warriors of another era.

"Where evil is mighty and defiant, the obligation to use force – that is war – arises." – Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Naval Strategy*, 1911. (note: not 9/11. But close if you speed read.)

When I read, listen, view the liberals attack on the activities at GITMO prison, or Abu Ghraib detention centers, I wonder when they lost the realization that this is war, and these centers are designed to stop the hated enemy from inflicting more damage and in that process collect intelligence on what they know, do, will do, were supposed to do, and why they are willing to die for their beliefs that are so much different than ours.

Remember: we go to war to protect the way we LIVE. They go to war to DIE!!! It is the same critics that were screaming that we weren't conducting the war fast enough; we

didn't have good intelligence, etc. Please reflect on this: The prisoners in Abu Ghraib and GITMO have better living conditions than our troops fighting the war on terrorism.

In my "Red Cell" mentality, if I were a terrorist and needed a break; I'd get caught, go to the R&R center (we call a prison or detention center), and rest for a while so that when I was released I would be ready to kick ass again and I would have studied the hated enemy (us) in our enclaves.

Now this goes against my logic. If I can save one warriors' life by making a terrorist "uncomfortable," then that makes perfect logic to me.

FACE REALITY please.

Admiral James B. Stockdale – who I had the pleasure to serve under at the Pentagon, and was another warrior who recently died – was a Naval aviator shot down over North Vietnam and suffered years of brutal imprisonment; his ordeal made him an advocate of the power of moral and ethical leadership.

In an article "Educating Leaders" (Washington Quarterly, Winter 1983), he offered:

"Integrity is one of those words that many people keep in that desk drawer labeled 'too hard.' It is not a topic for the dinner table or the cocktail party. When supported with education, one's integrity can give a person something to rely on when rules and principles seem to waver, and when faced with a hard choice of right and wrong. To urge people to develop it is not a statement of piety but of practical advice anyone who has lived in an intense extortion environment [a POW] realizes that the most potent weapon an adversary can bring to bear is manipulation, the manipulation of a prey's shame. A clear conscience is one's only protection."

The referred-to "manipulation" is what has been practiced at our detention centers; not out-and-out physical torture like he and Senator John McCain suffered. Let's not forget the treatment of our Blackwater contractors who were killed, beheaded, dragged through the streets and made a spectacle of by terrorists. Let's not forget the Iraqi security forces, politicians, clergy and most of all innocent women and children they continue to kill on a daily basis by their bombings. Let's not forget the train bombings in Spain and more recently the train and bus bombings in London. These were civilians whose only fault was that their governments were "coalition partners," and they did not adhere to the "proper beliefs."

Is this an application of ethics in the War Against Terrorism? IS ETHICS A ONE-WAY STREET?

This is not a war to "win or lose," but one to keep at bay. The Middle Eastern and Asian clock runs different than ours. They have patience to wait us out and attack when they are ready or when it is convenient. We, on the other hand, revolve around a 23-minute clock. It's a TV show. We see all our problems – social and other – portrayed, drama-

tized, and solved within 23 minutes or maybe as long as 46 minutes. We have no “staying power.” We are “results oriented,” and we leave the mundane on the cutting room floor for somebody else to resolve. Our national policy is – and has been – to engage the enemy “over there” so that we do not suffer collateral damage here at home.

In nautical verbiage, the best anti-swimmer tactic is to keep him out of the water. Keep the terrorists out of our country and for those cells already here (and they are), keep them off-balance and unsure of themselves and their targets. With the popularity of Reality TV, I don’t understand why the general population in this country can’t accept that this is a war without rules, without flags, without borders, without uniforms, and without our values or logic.

THIS IS A LONG TERM WAR.

In closing, I offer a quote from General George S. Patton, Jr. (from a diary entry on 15 April 1943): “War is very simple, direct, and ruthless. It takes a simple, direct, and ruthless man to wage war.”

Commander Richard Marcinko (US Navy, ret.) is the founder and first commanding officer of SEAL Team Six (a counterterrorist force, which has been reconstituted as Naval Special Warfare Development Group) and RED CELL (a SEAL unit tasked with testing Naval security forces throughout the world). Commander Marcinko is also the author of numerous books, including The New York Times best-seller, *Rogue Warrior*. His latest work, *Vengeance*, is said to be “a thriller ripped from tomorrow’s headlines.”

Authors Note: The reference to the SEAL loss isn’t the event that happened after SEAL Team 6 killed bin Laden.

Silent Running – Chapter 17

“When does the action begin? When does the first shoe drop?”

In chapter 7 TSHTF the first time. People didn't stop and think, TSHTF when Bush signed the John Warner Bill. The reality was we'd always have major public emergencies in one form or another. The weather was responsible for some of those, mother earth and her hot center for a few more and a person could never discount the effect of global warming.

They said it would take to the end of the 21st century for the sea level to rise to a level where coasts were threatened. They said the Gulf Stream wouldn't sink any time soon. They are guessing. Who cares about global warming when the government only represents itself? It's going to tell us what is good for us and what isn't. If I was paranoid when I was 5, I'm positively psychotic now.

Ron likes to take a different view. He says in the long-term it will all even out. He's probably right, but we have to get from the short-term first. My ulcers never totally healed because I worry too much. I worried that sooner or later, someone would figure out we had a shelter under the house.

The boys found a Beacon Hill, plan D, sitting on a lot. It was, in every way, identical to our home. I got the contractor out to put in risers so Ron and Linda's new home could be firmly attached to the ground. It took a week to get the risers in and another week to assemble the home. The final stage was moving their things into their new home. A few days later, the feds showed up and wanted to search the place.

“Take a chill pill Ronald you're going to have a heart attack.”

“Son-of-a-bitch! Have you been putting up with this for long?”

“Ever since I took out those 4 soldiers. They've tapered off some, thanks to my antics. I have a spare hoe if you need it.”

“For 2¢, I'd take 'em on.”

“You're free to join the Resistance. We're small and the only thing we've done so far is secure better munitions. All you have to say is that you're in and I'll sponsor you.”

“I'm in. Where can I get a set of radios like what you have?”

“You can take the set in our house; most of my radios are in the shelter. What do you want to do for the Resistance?”

“Anything they'll let me do.”

“Are you familiar with explosives?”

“Nope.”

“Me either. Have you ever shot an M4 carbine?”

“Nope.”

“Me either. On this last operation, I ended up doing nothing but listening to the radios, I felt like I got left out.”

“You were left out? Man, I was sitting in your house with a garage door opener, waiting for the feds to show up.”

“I’m beginning to think they aren’t military but Blackwater. There’s no way to tell of course, except from their attitude. I can’t believe the military would run that roughshod on the populace. Besides, did you notice their guns?”

“MP-5SD?”

“Nope, UMP-45s with suppressors. And, they all had the same weapons except for their sniper. I think they call those troop carriers the Grizzly. It will stop any ammo up to and including .50 caliber. Those weren’t USGI vehicles.”

“How do you stop them?”

“I doubt they could stand up to LAWs. I didn’t hear how many they got, but if it’s enough, maybe you and I can each get a case. There are 5 to a case, in case you’re wondering.”

“What about that new ammo you were talking about?”

“The M993 and the M995? It was tested against the Russian BRDM-2, but I doubt it was tested against the Grizzly. The BRDM-2 series, with maximum armor of 14 mm, can be penetrated by artillery fragments and .50 caliber machine gun fire. Its tires are not protected by armor and are particularly vulnerable to puncture from fire of all kinds. Russia built those in the 60s. I think their latest vehicle is called the BTR-T aka BMP-4.”

I had no idea whether my Raufoss ammo would penetrate the hull of a Grizzly and frankly, the risk of finding out was too great. The vehicle had several firing ports plus various guns up top in roof mounted turrets: Light Machine Gun, Heavy Machine Gun, Grenade Launching Machine Gun and TOW missiles. Why would a private security firm build an armored vehicle with TOW missiles? One man had strong opinions on our fighting vehicles.

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“Dad, we have an operation coming up and we’re shorthanded. Could Ron and you help?”

“Do you mean with the radios or on the operation?”

“On the operation. You can give Aaron your Loaded M1A and Ron can use the Super Match. We need cover in the form of a couple of snipers. You wouldn’t be on the front line, but close to it.”

“Would I have to carry the Tac-50 very far?”

“On second thought, you take the Super Match and let Ron use the Tac-50.”

“I’ll talk to him; he’s been itching for action. Say, did you get enough LAWs that Ron I can each have a case?”

“I put 2 cases in the armory. Do you know how to use them?”

“Nope, but I have Army FM 3-23.25, I’ll read up on them. 2 cardboard cases or 2 wood cases?”

“2 wood cases, each containing 3 cardboard cases. Each case holds...”

“Five rockets. Yeah, I know, I read up on the LAW rockets. Tyne Daly doesn’t know much about them, you know.”

“Huh?”

“Never mind. It was *The Enforcer*, Dirty Harry number 3. I’ll talk to Ron and see if he wants in.”

“Let me know soon, the operation is tomorrow.”

“Is Ron here?”

“He taking a nap.”

“Wake him up; he’ll want to hear this.”

“Gee, I don’t know, he...”

“HEY ASSHOLE, WAKEUP!”

“What do you want uglier than me?”

“Want to go on a mission?”

“When?”

“Tomorrow. They need snipers to back them up.”

“My rifles are hunting rifles, not sniper rifles.”

“You can use the Tac-50 and I’ll use the Super Match. By the way, we have LAW rockets, one case each.”

“How many is that?”

“15 each. I’ll replace the ball ammo with Raufoss and you can take all 10 magazines. I don’t think we’ll get close, maybe 1,000 meters. Derek said they needed someone to cover their back.”

“What time?”

“We leave at midnight. I’ll put the MUNS night scopes on the rifles. You’d better get some more sleep, I come back around 11pm.”

“I’m awake now, asshole.”

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I headed to the shelter to get our gear together, add the night sights and unpack some LAW rockets. When I’d finished, I went upstairs to get something to eat.

“I wasn’t planning on supper for a while Gary.”

I’ll settle for anything, Ron and I are going out on a mission tonight. I have to pick him up later.”

“Do you want a sandwich or something more substantial?”

“Could you fix me a box of macaroni and cheese?”

“Anything else?”

“Not that I can think of.”

“I can fix you green beans, sliced bread or...”

“I said no. You know the word, right? Capital N lower case o. It means I don’t want anything else. Just the macaroni and cheese, please.”

“Where Ron and you going?”

“I don’t know, Derek didn’t tell me.”

“Is it dangerous?”

“It could be, but it will be dark and we’ll be about 1,000 meters from the action. We’re going to provide sniper fire to cover their backs.”

“Is it dangerous?”

“There always an element of danger, Sharon. A rock could come out from behind the sun and smack us on the head. Someone with a machinegun could spray our position. We could get in an auto accident on our way to save the world. Ron could have a heart attack or I could get hypoglycemia.”

“Maybe you had better stay home.”

“I gave my word so I can’t stay home. We probably won’t even fire a gun; Derek spent a year in Iraq and never had to fire his.”

“Which rifle are you taking?”

“I was going to take the Super Match, but Aaron didn’t bring it back. I think I’ll take my Loaded, it’s almost as accurate.”

“Ron taking the Tac-50?”

“That’s what Derek suggested, it’s pretty heavy and 10 magazines of ammo must weigh a ton.”

“How many magazines are you taking?”

“One in the rifle, eight in my vest and a bandoleer with another 10 mags. I’ll leave it in the Jeep unless I need it.”

“You be careful, you’re too old to be doing things like this.”

“I know, I thought he’d want us to monitor the radios. We probably won’t be able to see much except for the night vision scopes I put on the rifles. I had to sight the scope; it’s the one I got for the Super Match. I loaded the mags with Black Hills Match and Ron has Raufoss.”

“What are you talking about, bullets?”

“Yes. Well, actually the kind of ammo we’re going to be using.”

“When are leaving?”

“I have to pick Ron up at 11, which should give me time for a nap. Could you wake me at 10?”

“Sure, I’ll still be up.”

“Gary, it’s 10:15.”

“Man, I hope you have some strong coffee, I was out like a light. I’ll run through the shower to wake up, could you bring me a cup?”

“What is there left to do?”

“Pick up Ron and leave. I’d better call him and make sure he’s awake.”

If I had wanted Sharon to wake me up at 10:15, I’d have said 10:15 and not 10:00. I’d learned long ago to add up to a half hour to the time I really wanted to get up. Ron had been up for 20 minutes. I rushed through the shower, had a cup, used the bathroom again and when I was properly dressed, walked over to Ron’s.

“Ready to go partner? Everything you need is in the Jeep. I even put in 2 M4s and a bag of mags, just in case.”

“Whatever.”

The full moon allowed us to drive without headlights, It would have been far better if we had night vision goggles, but we didn’t. Derek provided AN/PVS-27 MUNS night vision, the best, and it was available to both the military and civilians but was expensive, costing more than the Tac-50 rifle.

To prevent us from getting lost, they sort of stuck us in the middle of the small convoy. When we got to where we were going, Cox Field, I realized my first mistake. That airport was lit up brighter than day, we needed the day scopes. That was easy we dismounted the night scope mounted in front of the day scope.

“I think sometimes that paranoia is a good thing. Now that I know where the operation is, I’m glad I brought 2 cartons of LAWs rockets. We’d better hurry; they’re getting set up now.”

We weren’t short of guns, I had my M1A, an M4 and the PT1911 .45. Ron had my Tac-50, an M4 and his .41 magnum SA Ruger. We had more ammo than we’d probably need. They had Cox Field lit up bright as day, with roving patrols in vehicles and on foot. The vehicles could have been those Grizzlies I mentioned, I’d only seen one picture, 5 years before.

o

One of the ARNG critical readiness requirements is small arms and crew-served weapons modernization. With the advent of Army Transformation to Units of Action (UA's) the ARNG has currently documented shortfall of 3,377 Mk19's. Operational requirements resulting from the GWOT have resulted in extensive unit-to-unit transfers of Mk19's to deploying units. M2 .50 caliber machine guns and operational barrels are also in short supply. As the primary suppressive weapon for CS and CSS any shortage of these weapons is critical.

The RDD validates an ARNG requirement by 2005 for 9,159 Mk19's at a cost of \$15.5k each. On hand are 5,782 Mk19's, the majority of which are deployed. Fielding to fill the previous ARNG requirement was completed in 2003 and the new increased requirement has not yet been programmed. The Mk19 UFR is 3,377 and may increase as ARNG modularity above UA level is documented.

Funding the Mk19 will give National Guard Soldiers the same capability as Active Army Forces to deploy and operate with maximum effectiveness on all fronts of the Global War on Terror. It greatly contributes to their ability to rapidly defend themselves with high volume, suppressive fire in adverse conditions. Failure to fund the Mk19 will increase soldier risk and the costs of pre-deployment cross-leveling, which also degrades the ARNG's ability to train for and execute both its federal and state missions.

The original plans to replace obsolete, but numerous .50 caliber (12.7mm) Browning M2HB heavy machine guns in the US service listed the 25mm XM307 OCSW weapon as a successor to the 80+ years old Browning. But the delays in the development of the highly expensive and sophisticated OCSW led to the conclusion that the US Forces do need something new, and at least as effective as old "Ma Deuce" (M2HB) right now. So in 2000 US military requested a lightweight, .50 caliber machine gun to supplement old M2HBs until the arrival of the much more effective 25mm XM307 OCSW system. The XM312 "lightweight heavy machine gun" is based on the 25mm XM307, but without its comprehensive and expensive explosive ammo and fire control it is much cheaper and could be finalized much faster.

The XM312 will be one of the lightest (if not lightest of all) .50 caliber (12.7mm) machine guns on the market. This advantage, which will make it two-men portable, comes at the cost of decreased cyclic rate of fire, which is more than 2 times lower, than on other .50 caliber guns. This will make this gun strictly anti-ground weapon, because this low rate of fire will make it ineffective against fast-moving targets like helicopters and low-flying aircrafts. The practical rate of fire, however, is quoted to be no less than of M2HB, around 40 rounds per minute. XM312 also should be no less (if not more) accurate than the M2HB. (The XM307/XM312 programs were cancelled.)

Have I ever told you the Army is going to improve itself to the point where it can't function?

o

Blackwater wasn't hampered by such foolishness. They picked systems that worked, like the M2HB and the Mk19. I had followed up on them after I'd learned about them and they were mostly SOCOM troops, our very best and they earned more working for a private contractor. There for a while, they only worked for FEMA. They simply didn't know who they were up against, the dynamic duo from Palmdale.

I heard a command in my radio, "Go." I nudged Ron and told him to pick a target, I'd do the same. My day scope for my M1A was that Burris red dot sight with a 3MOA dot. It was less than worthless at 1,000 meters so I settled for providing suppressing fire. Ronald set the sight on the Tac-50 for 1,000 meters and began to pick them off, one by one. He was a pretty good shot for an old fart. He concentrated on the people in the towers on the near side of Cox Field (PRX).

I wasn't so sure this was a good idea, freeing the people from the camp. It meant we'd have to produce more food, find more weapons and ammo and just hope they'd built up enough resentment at the feds that they'd join the militia. One would have thought that Ron and I were far enough from the action to avoid return fire. Both the M1A and Tac-50 had the good flashhiders (suppressors) a Surefire FA762S and a Jet, so I was sure they couldn't see us. Neither of us was firing fast enough to heat the cans to the point they'd show up on infrared. The only thing I came up with, after we got home, was that one of those Blackwater people was aware they were being sniped at and decided to rake the ridge we were on.

He started just below the top of the ridge and walked that Ma Deuce across and then moved a row higher and went back across. About the third time, we realized what was happening and ducked. If we'd been 2 seconds slower, we'd be pushing up daisies. The 4th pass put slugs in our positions, or should I say where we had been seconds earlier. The gunner made a 5th pass ventilating the air and then somebody from down below, shot him.

"That was close."

"Too close. I'd rather write about it than do it."

"Gar, we're too old for this chit."

"Amen. Next time, I'll loan them the rifles and you and I will stay home. Are you ok? You didn't get hit did you?"

"It wasn't for lack of trying. No. I'm ok. I don't see anyone else left to shoot."

"We'd better wait until someone calls us on the radio and tells us to stand down. Of course, that doesn't mean we have to shoot anymore. I don't want to anyway, I loaded

my magazines with Black Hills Match and all I have is a Burris red dot sight. Hell, I could have used that South African surplus.”

“Why didn’t you load half the mags with surplus and half with match ammo?”

“I was counting on Aaron returning my rifle and once I got going, I guess I didn’t know when to stop. From now on, I’ll do that, load 10 each and all I’ll have to do is switch bandoleers.”

“Where did you find bandoleers that would hold loaded 20-round magazines?”

“I didn’t find them, I made pattern and asked Sharon to make me a couple. She also made those 6 magazine bandoleers for the Tac-50. I sure wish I had one that the day I went hunting.”

“How did you manage to carry 5 magazines?”

“One in each back pocket, 2 in my waist band and one in the rifle. I damned near walked out of my pants. Thank God I could drive back, I was exhausted by the time I lugged that stuff a quarter mile. A round goes about $\frac{1}{3}$ of a pound.”

“Target secure; stand down.”

“Roger. Well, Ronald, let’s start humping the stuff back to the Jeep. It should be easier, you’re carrying less ammo. I’ll get a paper bag and police the brass.”

“You know someone who can reload .50 caliber ammo?”

“No, but that doesn’t mean there isn’t someone who can. I even save the Berdan primed South African; it can be reloaded, it just harder replacing the primer.”

I’m guessing it was about 4am when we got home. We put the weapons in the shelter and headed off to bed. Tried? I was tired before we left, now I was closer to paralyzed. I stripped off my clothes and fell into bed. The next thing I knew, Sharon was standing by the bed holding a cup.

“What time is it?”

“1pm. You sawed about a cord of wood.”

“Honey, I have a headache, could you get me a pill?”

“What do you want?”

“2 Norco.”

o

I liked the 'ines', caffeine and nicotine. While I can give you 100 reasons not to use either, there was one reason why I did, because I wanted to. That was the last OP Ron and I ever went out on. I did get my Super Match back from Aaron, after the OP went down. I got it all sighted back in. They set up another radio system in Paris. After freeing the hostages from the camp, we figured the military would be back in force; they said they'd be back but they never came.

Paris hadn't been directly touched by either terrorist attack or the war. Other than fallout and some heavy handedness by the feds, or their minions, we were in fair shape. As far as I knew, we didn't have some guy with a storage building filled with weapons. It hadn't mattered, he hadn't passed them out on Jericho either. We were in the same state we were in 2007. This country has survived terrorist attacks before but, we'd never had WW III before.

And, we found more Marlboros and KOOLs.

Silent Running – Chapter 18

*Take the children and yourself
And hide out in the cellar
By now the fighting will be close at hand
Don't believe the church and state
And everything they tell you
Believe in me, I'm with the high command
Can you hear me, can you hear me running?
Can you hear me running, can you hear me calling you?
Can you hear me, can you hear me running?
Can you hear me running, can you hear me calling you?*

*There's a gun and ammunition
Just inside the doorway
Use it only in emergency
Better you should pray to God
The Father and the Spirit
Will guide you and protect from up here*

*Can you hear me, can you hear me running?
Can you hear me running, can you hear me calling you?
Can you hear me, can you hear me running?
Can you hear me running, can you hear me calling you?*

*Swear allegiance to the flag
Whatever flag they offer
Never hint at what you really feel
Teach the children quietly
For some day sons and daughters
Will rise up and fight while we stood still*

*Can you hear me, can you hear me running?
Can you hear me running, can you hear me calling you?
Can you hear me, can you hear me running?
Can you hear me running, can you hear me calling you?*

*Can you hear me running (can you hear me calling you?)
(Can you hear me) hear me calling you?
(Can you hear me running) hear me running babe?
(Can you hear me running) hear me running?
Calling you, calling you*

In 2012, the US was a far different county; the politicians had come out of the closet, so to speak. In most cases, it was all about power; they had it and intended to keep it. 2010 should have been an off election year and 2012 was Presidential election year; it

didn't happen, the excuse being the voting machines were destroyed, there was trouble getting paper ballots printed and they didn't want any hanging chads. The government had worked with Clear Channel Communications, or someone, and had restored radio. It had a new format, mostly propaganda interspersed with the news. Local news was accurate, national news was anybody's guess.

With federally approved driver's licenses, Internal Passports, travel documents and the embedded chip anyone who wanted to know who you were didn't really need to ask; with one waive of a wand, they knew your whole life history. The business about asking for ID and papers resembled something out of a bad B movie. I hadn't blamed anyone who gave up the information about who we were, a person could run, but they couldn't hide.

The government eased the new system in, little by little, starting with Dubya. He had the excuses, 9/11, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and the continuing terrorist threat. The problem with the Border Fence Act was it didn't fence in our entire border. Our border was 12,034 km long, including: Canada 8,893 km (including 2,477 km with Alaska) and Mexico 3,141 km. We really needed to fund 3,141km + (8,893-2,477km) = 9,557km. What's more, we needed to fund it 20 years ago. If they got rid of all that federal aid 20 years ago, people would have worked or starved.

The idea of having papers was wholly unconstitutional, beyond having an External Passport and a state ID card. The biometric chips didn't accomplish anything; terrorists bought the machines from the same manufacturers the government used. A person didn't have to go to the DMV to get a state ID card or driver's license, they just cost more. They were authentic, right down to the imbedded holographic image. Just don't get stopped by a cop. And, after the war, even that wasn't a problem.

A global thermonuclear war does more than blow up buildings and kill people, it changes governments and the rules they operate by. It also changes the survivors; just like there are damn few atheists in foxholes, there aren't so many liberals around when the government has proven it can't protect the people or keep making their entitlement payments. If the government couldn't guarantee utilities or motor fuel, how could they make entitlement payments? That was hard, Ron and Linda, Sharon and I were all on retirement and Damon got disability. Or, should I say we used to?

Social Security money was supposed to be separate from the government money. Remember Gomer Pyle? *Surprise, surprise, surprise Sgt. Carter* (he died of a heart attack in '74). Except the government borrowed some. It wasn't supposed to be a problem. In truth, it probably wasn't, no matter where Social Security had the money invested, it would have been gone.

Our home was paid for, but it probably wouldn't have mattered. The stores couldn't collect sales taxes because they had no goods to sell. Everything available was now traded at the Farmer's Market. Property taxes piled up uncollected, few if any people had

the money to pay them. They couldn't impose an income tax without causing a taxpayer revolt.

People didn't stop and think about the effect Hurricane Katrina had on Texas hospitality. Katrina redistributed New Orleans' population across the southern United States. Houston, had an increase of 35,000 people; Mobile, gained over 24,000; Baton Rouge, over 15,000; and Hammond received over 10,000, nearly doubling its size. Even Chicago got some, about 6,000. In the wake of Katrina in August 2005, Houston provided shelter to more than 150,000 people from New Orleans in various facilities around the city, including about 24,000 who were sheltered in the infrequently-used Astrodome stadium.

You knew Houston got hit; it was the fourth largest city in the US. We were in between the space shuttle and the new Orion. Prior to receiving its current name Orion was known as the Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV). Each F-1 engine produced 1,500,000 lbf (6.7 MN) of thrust. The new RS-68 engine produced 650,000 lbf (2.9 MN), but it had 2 5 section solid booster rockets. The space shuttle used the same rocket with 4 sections. Lots of people had probably missed that, but I followed the space program as close as I followed the fall of the nation. I guess we weren't going to the Moon or Mars now, were we?

I watched the program on the History Channel back before we'd moved from Palmdale to Paris. The show was titled, *World War III? Beyond Lebanon*. It examined whether the Muslim extremists would format WW III. I'd always maintained that, for all of its posturing, it could be Russia. My second guess had been China, but considering the number of places attacked, China didn't have enough weapons. Iran was only interested in attacking Israel, but I don't know how that came out, and neither did Ronald.

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"Gar-Bear, did you ever figure we'd both end up in Texas hoeing gardens?"

"Ronald, I never figured on Texas, especially a town named Paris. What I can't figure out is why the government hasn't been back? The only thought that comes to mind is that that camp was run by FEMA contractors."

"Blackwater?"

"Or someone very much like them. If those vehicles we saw were Grizzlies, then the contractor had to be Blackwater. I understood they said they'd be back. If that's really the case where are they? Who the hell was that Robert Hawkins character in the Jericho TV series? You know that black guy with all the survivalist equipment."

"He had to be a spook."

"I figured as much. He had a case of M-16s or something. Say, I'm giving some thought to using the SR-556 in the future. As much as I like the M1A, especially the Super Match, it's just getting too much to carry."

"Can I have it?"

"Have what?"

"That Super Match of yours."

"What are you, nuts? First you wanted my Tac-50. I let you use it. Now you want my Super Match? You're the guy with the .375 H&H magnum and the Winchester .338 magnum. They both have scopes, why do you want my Super Match?"

"I was just trying to see if I could really piss you off."

"I don't get angry, I get even, remember? I'll keep the Super Match as my backup and if you really need a sniper rifle, I'll loan you the Tac-50 and some Raufoss. You know what; we never fired any of those LAWs because the range was too far. Now that pisses me off big time, I always wanted to fire a rocket."

"We might still get the chance, Gar-Bear, Blackwater or the military could always come back. It doesn't have to be Blackwater, it could be Crescent Security Group or one of a few dozen firms the government used."

"You know what? I never really wanted to be a soldier. I never wanted to do any more than defend the home place. So far, all that has amounted to defending it against weeds in the garden. I don't have a castle, not even a Castlebrook barn. What I really need is a drink."

"I always told you I'd buy you your first one."

"But not the second?"

"Nope. How long do you have?"

"I guess it's 12 years. Crap, you must be coming up on twenty on the third of April."

"I am, but who's counting? I never figured I'd live long enough to get twenty."

"Well, that calls for a drink, coffee?"

"I brought my own sweet and low."

"Are there any cars coming?"

“I don’t think so why?”

“Do you see that butterfly down by the gate?”

“Barely, why?”

“I’ll bet I can hit it.”

“How much will you bet?”

“Nothing, my dad lost a nice rifle that way.”

o

Most days, that’s the way it went. We were either sitting on the patio drinking coffee or in the garden murdering weeds. Our lives weren’t like a box of chocolates, we always knew what we were going to get. We took time out every Saturday morning to put a few magazines through our guns, just in case.

Thank God we weren’t depending on the generators anymore. The REA had the power up and running and that let us listen to the radio. I missed the Country western music, but this was some form of public radio. They had the news at the top and bottom of the hour and propaganda in between. Sometimes, the times between the top and bottom of the hour were nothing but empty air time. I decided to grow a beard, but cut it off when it began to itch.

Ron and I had good relationships with our hoes and you can take that any way you want to. Considering our age, we mostly leaned on them. I longed for a tiller to do between the rows and couldn’t find one, despite looking several times. Damon and Derek had gone crazy; I swore they’d wear my chainsaw out. Our 28 cords of wood surrounding the house had become 56. Ron had the same amount as we did. They were selling extra wood and some of our produce at the Farmer’s Market in Paris. Working together, we kept the shelves full and occasionally got more ammo, usually reloads. Using reloads can be very risky, it depends on whether the person reloading knows his/her business, has the right components and has their dies set up right.

Hillary wasn’t headed to Paris, the best decision she ever made. The Air Force had put up a new type of GPS about 4-6 years before; they were supposed to be resistant to EMP, jamming and have an extended life. Not that we needed GPS, we didn’t go anywhere. The Gulfstream relied on GPS, among other things, to get to its destination. They left Colorado headed for Arkansas and we didn’t have a clue, there hadn’t been anything on the radio.

“Look at that.”

“Look at what?”

“That’s a contrail.”

“That’s a long ways from here Ronald, it must be a military flight; the airlines went out of business.”

“That’s the first one I’ve seen since the war.”

“It probably took them that long to get a plane to fly. Must be somebody important to merit a jet.”

“You want to swap hoes?”

“Why? I’m just getting used to the one I have.”

“Mine’s dull. Let’s take a break and I’ll put a file to it.”

“You file that many more times and you won’t have much hoe left. I guess we could take it into Paris and have a new sickle blade welded on (Warren hoe, not a draw hoe or a Dutch hoe).”

“Gar-Bear, who do you think was in that plane?”

“How should I know? John McCain, Hillary Clinton, John Kerry? If it’s a Democrat, maybe we’ll get lucky and it will crash.”

“Look at that. More contrails, it must have a fighter escort.”

“Get your hoe and let’s go to town.”

o

“Did you hear?”

“Hear what? Ron and I saw 5 jets fly by a while back. They were way up north, so we couldn’t have heard them. We just came to town to get his hoe repaired.”

“Break the handle?”

“Wore out the blade. I figured to get a new sickle blade welded on and we could grind it to shape.”

“Why don’t you just get a new hoe?”

“There’s nothing wrong with the handle, it just needs a new blade.”

“Whatever. Dad, I don’t know anything about any airplanes. You said you saw contrails?”

“At first there was just one, possibly a twin engine aircraft. Later Ron pointed out that 4 more single contrails joined the first. I know both piston and jet aircraft can produce contrails, but as fast as the planes moved across the sky, my money is on jets.”

“I’ll pass it along and you can get back to your ho’s.”

“I don’t like the way you said that, it’s hoes with an ‘e’, not the other kind. I think you should consider raising the alert level from guarded to elevated.”

“Because you saw 5 planes?”

“Exactly. I couldn’t tell the heading, but it was close to east. If Broom Hillary went to ground, my money would be on her hiding out at either Cheyenne Mountain or Holloman AFB. We’re close to done cleaning up since the war; it’s about time for her to appear.”

“If she were still alive, why wouldn’t she have made herself known before now?”

“Nobody said she was stupid. She could assert that national security concerns kept her wherever she was hiding. Ron told me that the government wouldn’t have to depend on only Blackwater; he mentioned a company named Crescent Security. He said the government probably had a couple of dozen firms on their payroll.”

“That’s right, Dad, there were several contractors in Iraq. The ratio of contractors to military was 1:10, compared to 1:50 during Desert Storm. The top 20 companies in 2004 were:

1. KBR (Halliburton), Houston, Texas: \$11.431 billion
2. Parsons Corp., Pasadena, Calif.: \$5.286 billion
3. Fluor Corp., Aliso Viejo, Calif.: \$3.755 billion
4. Washington Group International, Arlington, Va.: \$3.133 billion
5. Shaw Group/Shaw Engineering and Infrastructure, Baton Rouge, La.: \$3.051 billion
6. Bechtel Group Inc., San Francisco, Calif.: \$2, 830 billion
7. Perini Corporation, Framingham, Mass.: \$2.525 billion
8. Contract International Inc., Arlington, Va.: \$2.325 billion
9. Tetra Tech Inc., Pasadena, Calif.: \$1.542 billion
10. USA Environmental Inc., Tampa, Fla. \$1,542 billion
11. CH2M Hill, Englewood, Colo.: \$1.529 billion
12. American International Contractors, Inc. \$1.5 billion
13. Odebrecht-Austin \$1.5 billion
14. Zapata Engineering, Charlotte, N.C.: \$1.479 billion
15. Environmental Chemical Corporation, Burlingame, Calif.: \$1.475 billion
16. Explosive Ordnance Technologies Inc., Rumson, N.J.: \$1.475 billion

17. Stanley Baker Hill, LLC, Muscatine, Iowa: \$1.2 billion
18. International American Products, Irmo, S.C.: \$628 million
19. Research Triangle Institute, North Carolina: \$466 million
20. Titan Corporation, San Diego, Calif.: \$402 million

Other companies included: Louis Berger Group, BearingPoint, Creative Associates International Inc., Chemonics International Inc., Harris Corporation, Readiness Management Support LC, DynCorp (Computer Sciences Corp.), Lucent Technologies and EOD Technology Inc., Blackwater Security Consulting, General Electric, Detection Monitoring Technologies and Sealift Inc. There were more, but I forget the names.”

“So, governments’ train them and then they go to work in the private sector?”

“They can make several hundred dollars a day.”

“I guess I should have done more research on the subject, I didn’t realize that the government hired that many security contractors.”

“Oh, they weren’t all security contractors, some were rebuilding infrastructure, some provided transportation and other services. KBR ran our chow hall.”

“Was the food good?”

“Not really, I’d only rate it fair. I’ll recommend a higher security level based on the airplanes, but we won’t maintain it long, people have to work to eat.”

“We’ll get out the sniper rifles and dust them off, just in case you need us for an OP.”

“Do you still practice every week?”

“Of course, you never know when a MZB is going to show up. I’ll let you in on a secret, Ron carries an M4 and I carry my SR-556. The sniper rifles are so heavy, we can’t carry them anymore. We have a table on the patio so we can shoot from a rest.”

“What so you shoot?”

“From the rest? Ron shoots the Tac-50 and I shoot the Super Match.”

“What about patrols?”

“I suppose we could patrol, as long as we didn’t go more than 100 yards.”

“That’s not even a good start.”

“Remember us? We’re SENIOR CITIZENS! You want patrols, you provide the people. You just wait, kid, one of these days you’ll get old too. That patrol crap is just fine for the younger set, but we get tired swapping out magazines.”

“How do you handle that?”

“We fill all our magazines and stack them on the table. When we run out, it’s time to quit.”

“You don’t have any idea what’s going on, do you?”

“Sure I do, the sun comes up in the east and sets in the west. That’s the way it always has been and should continue until...”

“Until what?”

“Clarence’s rock come from behind the sun and destroys the planet.”

“I wonder how’s he’s doing?”

“I wonder if he’s still alive.”

“We are; why shouldn’t he be?”

“He could be, provided he’s learned Spanish.”

“Why would you say that?”

“I sort figure that Mexico has taken over Kalifornia by now so they have somewhere to put their illegal immigrants.”

“They’re hard on illegal immigrants.”

“Only on people going into Mexico, not on people leaving.”

“Let them have it, they’ll get rid of Feinstein and Boxer.”

“Somebody must vote for them, they keep getting reelected, just like scum rising to the top of the pond.”

“The last election we had was in 2008.”

“That’s right, I forgot. What was I doing?”

“You were stacking magazines on the table.”

“That’s right; I took a break because I was tired.”

“If someone mounts any kind of serious attack on us, we’re probably done for. It wouldn’t matter if we both had a Ma Deuce, Gary. We’re going to give a whole new meaning to spray and pray.”

“I’ll leave the praying to you Ron; I’ll concentrate on remembering how to insert the magazines. I lined them all up with the bullets pointing forward, I think I can remember.”

“How much of that is real and how much is an act?”

“Bat? I don’t see a bat. If we get down to defending ourselves with baseball bats, we’re really in trouble. That was embarrassing.”

“What was embarrassing?”

“When I got corrected on one story and found out you have to set the head spacing on a Ma Deuce every time you change the barrel.”

“What did you say in the story?”

“I assumed it was like the M240 with preset head space. You not only have to set the spacing, you have to set the timing. Now I’ve mostly got it figured out and we only have one problem.”

“Yeah, we don’t have a Ma Deuce.”

“We have the Tac-50 and it shoots all but the SLAP ammo, we should be good.”

“One minute you can’t remember your first name and the next you know all the details. Are you getting senile?”

“I suspect Alzheimer’s. If I don’t go to a doctor, we won’t know for sure and I won’t turn into Ronnie Ray-gun.”

“You worry me.”

“Can’t tell when I’m serious and when I’m acting?”

“I suppose.”

“If you see me insert a magazine with the bullets pointing to the rear, I have a problem. It wouldn’t be any fun if I was serious all of the time.”

“Say, I meant to ask you, did you get stripper clips and a charger to reload the magazines quickly?”